BOOK.

Liberty

OCT. 9, 1943 10c

Book:
LOVE AT FIRST FLIGHT
The War's Funniest Story

CAN WE EASE UP AFTER HITLER'S DEFEAT?

It's a feather in your cap when you buy that Extra War Bond

First among fine whiskies

THREE FEATHERS *Very Special Reserve*

THREE FEATHERS BLENDED WHISKEY, 86 Proof, 60% Grain Neutral Spirits. Schenley Distillers Corporation, New York, N. Y.

All our distilleries are concentrating 100% on the production of war alcohol

How police cars joined an 80,000,000 mile road test of synthetic rubber

Nearly three years ago, B. F. Goodrich invited America's leading companies to buy and test the first passenger car tires made with synthetic rubber ever sold in this country. One of the many companies that accepted the invitation was the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad. They put Silvertowns on five police cars. More than half the natural rubber in these tires was replaced by our synthetic--Ameripol.

Another story of the test that helped start America's great new synthetic rubber industry. Time: months before Pearl Harbor

The result: These tires proved synthetic rubber could stand punishment . . . on police cars—and on hundreds of other passenger cars all over America. This test totalled 80,000,000 miles. And the experience gained from it has given us vital help in making today's tires...tires in which 99% of the natural rubber has been replaced with the government's "GR-S" synthetic.

Naturally, most rubber is needed for our armed forces. That's why only a very few of these new synthetic tires are available to car owners who qualify. *Every patriotic American must continue to drive carefully and to get every possible mile from his present tires. Wasting rubber wastes America's strength.*

A few of the many companies that helped make this test

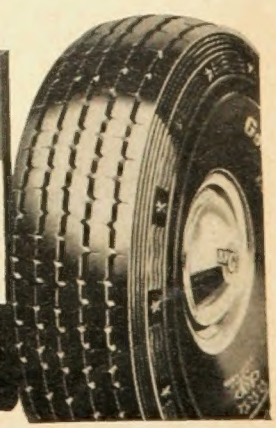
American Can Co.
Baltimore & Ohio Railroad
The Borden Co.
General Outdoor Advertising Co.
General Baking Co.
Gulf Oil Corporation
Geo. A. Hormel & Co.
Kellogg Company
N. Y. Telephone Co.
Pet Milk Sales Corp.
Railway Express Agency
Socony-Vacuum Oil Co.
Standard Brands, Inc.
The Texas Co.

Awards to 7 plants

In war or peace

B.F.Goodrich

FIRST IN RUBBER



Overheard in the Bathroom

A dirty, dingy toilet brings whispered comments. It's inexcusable these days. Sani-Flush keeps toilet bowls glistening and sanitary without messy work. It quickly removes stains and incrustations where toilet germs lodge. Cleans away a cause of toilet odors. Use Sani-Flush at least twice a week.

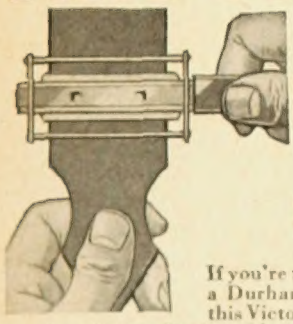
Don't confuse Sani-Flush with ordinary cleansers. It works chemically. Even cleans the hidden trap. *Cannot injure septic tanks or their action and is safe in toilet connections when used as directed on the can.* Sold everywhere. Two handy sizes. The Hygienic Products Co., Canton, Ohio.

Sani-Flush

CLEANS TOILET BOWLS WITHOUT SCOURING

LOOSE TALK COSTS LIVES

THIS STROP



gives DURHAM blades NINE LIVES

If you're the lucky owner of a Durham Duplex Razor*, this Victory Strop will make your long-lasting Durham blades last even longer. Durham's famous *hollow-ground* blades are *twice thicker*—to take repeated stroppings for "new blade" smoothness every shave.

*In case you don't own a Durham Razor, you may still find one at your drugstore.

Send $1 direct for special Durham strop outfit. Can be used only on Durham Duplex Blades. Sorry, No C. O. D.'s.

DURHAM-ENDERS RAZOR CORP., Dept. R, MYSTIC, CONN.

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LEE WAGNER, CIRCULATION MANAGER

Fired by AC

BOMBERS over Essen—or the South Pacific—mean that AC's special, precision-built Aircraft Spark Plugs are firing away at the Axis again. Since long before Pearl Harbor, these plugs have been rolling out to the fighting fronts, by the hundreds of thousands, every month.

The Army Air Forces recognize the need for *regular* spark plug *service,*—and so should you. No matter how well designed and built your spark plugs are, they will last longer, save gasoline, and assure easier starting *if they are kept clean, and the gaps accurately adjusted.*

Expert Service Now Available

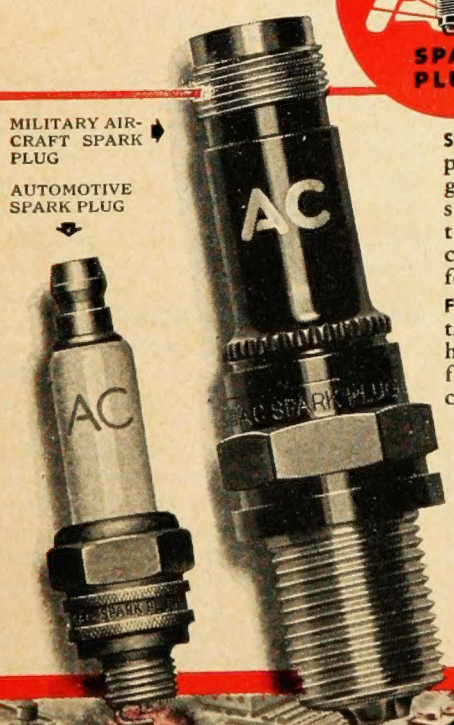
Your automotive service man can give you this service. He can match it with Conservation Service on the other eight AC products used on millions of cars, trucks, and tractors. We urge you to use this service (briefly described below)—to save badly needed material, and to conserve gasoline, oil, and tires.

When replacement is necessary, select AC—for complete satisfaction.

Awarded to AC on September 2, 1942, and renewed on June 19, 1943, for outstanding achievement in producing for Victory.

AC SPARK PLUG DIVISION
GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION

BACK THE ATTACK—WITH WAR BONDS!



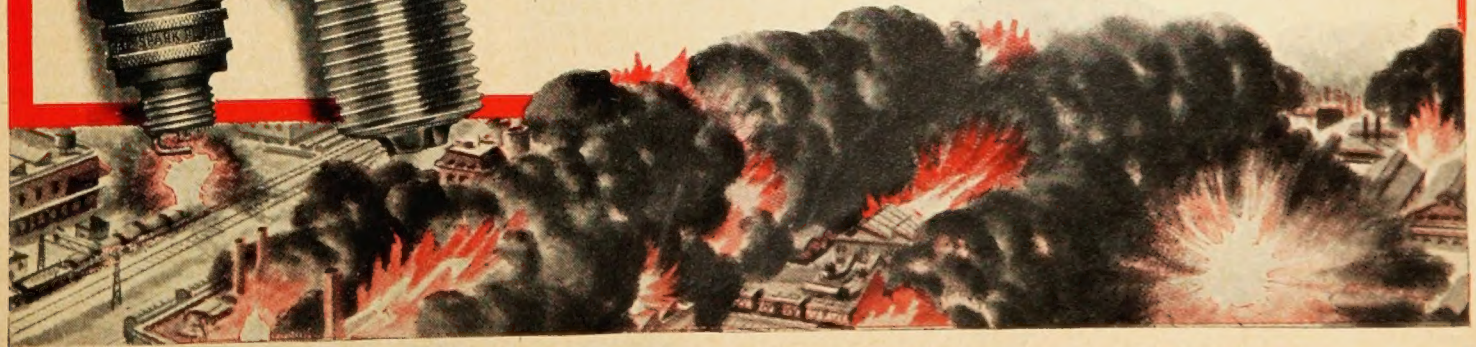
SPARK PLUGS—Dirty or worn plugs waste up to 10% on gas. They also cause hard starting, weaken your battery. Have your plugs cleaned and adjusted every few months.

FUEL PUMPS—Practically trouble free. But, if yours has been in use thirty or forty thousand miles, a check-up may be due.

AIR CLEANERS—A dirty air cleaner chokes down the flow of air into the carburetor. Your air cleaner should be rinsed whenever your car is lubricated.

DRIVING INSTRUMENTS—Speedometer, gasoline gauge, oil pressure gauge, ammeter, and temperature gauge seldom need service. But, if they give trouble, have them cared for *at once.*

OIL FILTERS—Slow driving accelerates formation of soot and carbon in engine oil. This dirt will clog piston rings, cause increased consumption of oil and gas. Replace your oil filter element whenever your dealer's AC Oil Test Pad shows that your oil is dirty.



Whirlwind's BROTHER

IT'S a 2-to-1 bet that your home electricity is born in a man-made hurricane five times as ferocious as any Nature ever cooked up. Engineers call it a steam turbine-generator.

A steam turbine is a kind of cross between a mammoth windmill and a giant's spinning top. It takes steam hot enough to heat the pipes a dull red, and squeezes the energy out of it until, 1/30 of a second later, all that's left is water too cool to bathe the baby in. The turbine turns a generator which passes this energy on to you as electricity—so you can use it to cook an egg, or freeze ice cubes, or make bombs to blast the Axis.

This machine isn't the sort of job that a manual training class would turn out! Just one part, small enough to hold in your hand, may handle more power than a dozen trucks. And the steam takes the turbine rotor for such a dizzy ride that if it were turned loose on the Atlantic seaboard, it would roll to San Francisco in four hours!

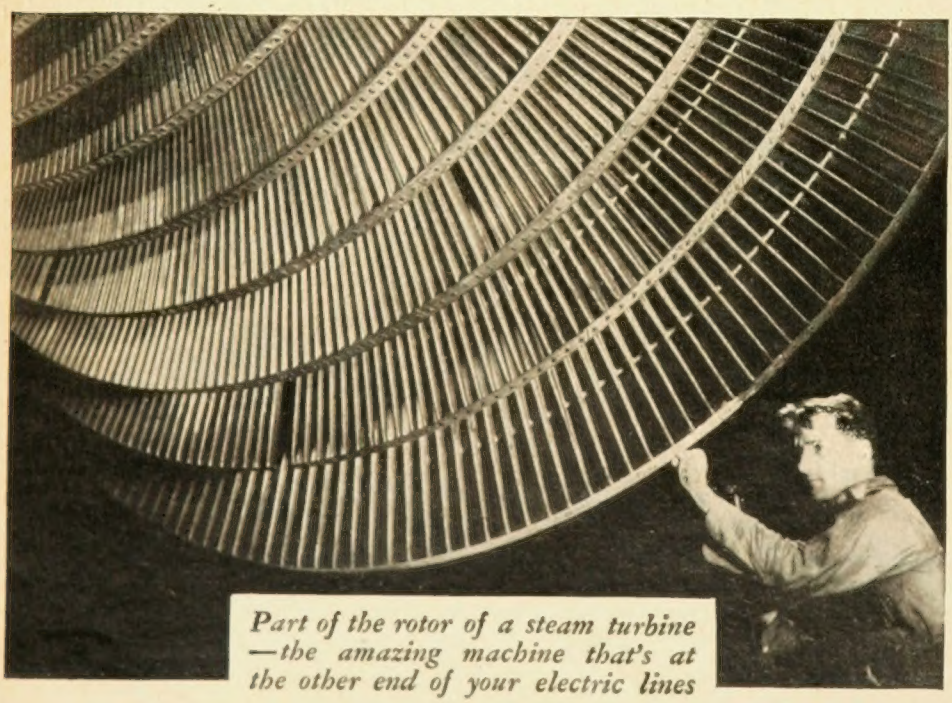
Today's turbine-generators turn out, from one ton of coal, more electricity than three tons used to give. That saved America millions of tons last year, plus precious man-hours in mining and transportation—all because G-E engineers, along with boiler and power-plant designers and engineers of electric service companies, have been improving turbines for 40 years.

More important yet, they have given us a wonderfully efficient machine to drive our ships of war—drive them faster and farther than those of our enemies.

War cannot destroy the ingenuity and experience that created the modern turbine—in fact, it stimulates them. And they will help to create for us better and richer lives in the peaceful years to come. *General Electric Company, Schenectady, New York.*

★ ★ ★

Tune in the General Electric MAZDA Lamp Radio Program—10 p.m. EWT, Sundays—NBC



Part of the rotor of a steam turbine—the amazing machine that's at the other end of your electric lines

GENERAL ELECTRIC

952-452M-911

★ VOX POP ★

"The Voice of the People"

YEARS VS. DAYS

FORT HUACHUCA, ARIZ.—If Mary Oyama, writer of My Only Crime Is My Face (August 14 Liberty), is expecting sympathy from all Americans because she is a Jap, she is sadly mistaken. For hundreds of years we Negroes have suffered just what she is experiencing now for a short period of time.—*Auxiliary Georgia Harris, 1922 S. C. U., W. A. C. Co.*

EGO ELEVATOR

RICHLAND CENTER, WIS.—Whenever I get an inferiority complex, I do a Ted Shane puzzle.

Did my ego lift this week when I

knew right off what prewarstratensians were!

$C_6H_4OCOCH_3COOH$—well, that was mere child's play.—*Eloise Fort James.*

Trying to do one of Shane's puzzles would lay our ego flat.

MARS MARS MARRIAGE

CAMP UPTON, N. Y.—OPA announces diamonds of less than one carat are not subject to price control. How the heck can men in the armed forces afford to get married? Are we to buy five-carat diamonds or be thrown to the jewelry lions?—*Pfc. G. E. Anderson.*

PARR PULLED A BONER

NEW YORK, N. Y.—In August 7, 1943, Liberty there was an interesting article written by Grant Parr entitled America's Flying Circus. I was glad to see the 57th Fighter Group get such good publicity, and there is no question as to their deserving it—but the overexaggeration and the grossly erroneous statements in that article were truly amazing (and, I may add, wrath-arousing) to the members of this American Fighter Group, which is and has been a member of the Desert Air Force. The 79th Fighter Group, admittedly the second American Fighter Group to join the Desert Air Force, is proud of its record, proud of its pilots who have fought (and some died) to clear the desert and Tunisian skies of enemy planes, to strategically bomb and strafe the Axis forces, to safely escort both American bombers and

R. A. F. bombers over the Axis targets, and to often successfully bomb enemy shipping and warships. We are equally proud of our ground personnel, who have so diligently done their job even under the toughest of desert conditions and hardships.—*Lt. James J. Bell, 79th Fighter Group.*

Whoops! Correspondent Grant Parr has been notified of his boner. We are waiting for his reply to come through from Cairo.

SPEAK UP, BROOKLYN

DENVER, COLO.—Those Texas and Kentucky battlers who have been calling each other names in Vox Pop ought to realize that both states are pretty swell and bury the hatchet.

In fact, it's a fine country from coast to coast—except for Brooklyn, which never had anything except a baseball team and hasn't even got that now.—*Joe Smith.*

FAREWELL TO ARMS

P/W CAMP, CAMP McCAIN, MISS.—Congratulations to Paul Hunter for that fine editorial (August 21 Liberty) Personal Effects.

I am not ashamed to admit that I had a big lump in my throat after reading it.—*Pvt. B. E. S.*

CALLING ALL ANNOUNCERS

HARTFORD, CONN.—I am a war worker—night shift. That means I must get my rest during the day. Well, try and do it! Here are a few common sleep destroyers: barking dogs; yelling chil-

dren; careless auto-horn blowing; and—worst of all—blaring radios.

People don't mean it—they just don't think. I want to ask radio announcers to occasionally put on the air an appeal to every one to remember the night worker who must sleep in the day.—*Frank Wood.*

HE KNOWS HIS CHUTE

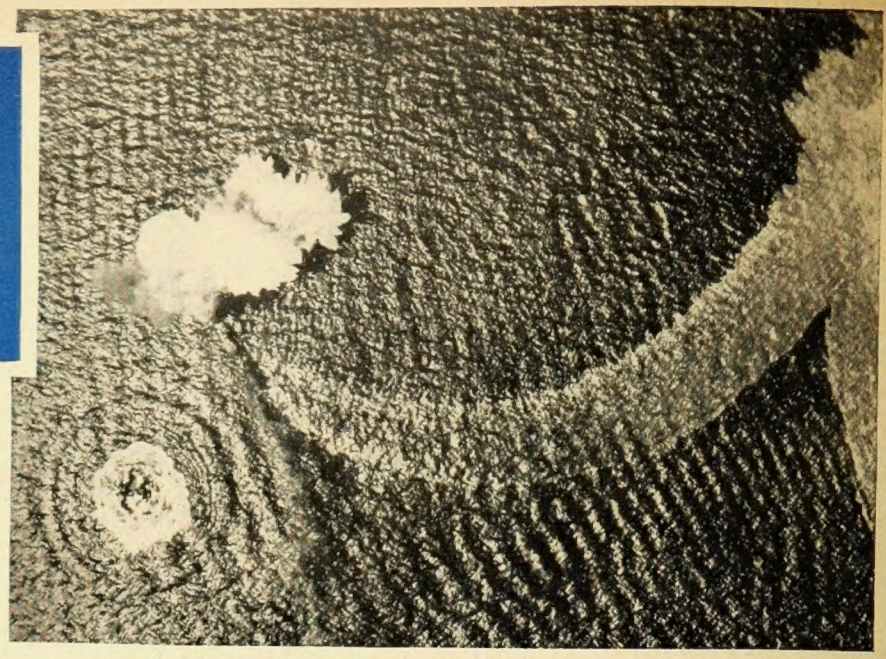
CAMP MACKALL, N. C.—In my nine months as a paratrooper in the United States Army I have never seen a "seat" type parachute used by a paratrooper. Yet in the picture of "A paratrooper, trained—and tough!" in Walls Are Made to Fly Over, by Keith Ayling (August 28 Liberty), that type chute is very clearly shown.—*Pvt. T. Pawlukewich.*

Dear Private P.: Your spotting the seat parachute speaks well for the IQ of Uncle Sam's paratroopers. The picture was an official one, passed by the OWI, though it does show the chute in the wrong position. It appears to be the right kind of parachute, however.—KEITH AYLING.

For
GOOD TASTE
I'll hand it to you
Discriminating people everywhere are discovering that in Blatz Pilsener alone are found such excellent quality, such truly good taste! The preference for Blatz extends across the nation. Each day it wins new, enthusiastic friends from coast to coast. Try it!
BLATZ BREWING CO., MILWAUKEE, WIS.
In Our 92nd Year
BUY WAR BONDS
SPECIAL PILSENER BREW
Blatz
Pilsener
BEER
Blatz
MILWAUKEE
Milwaukee's Most Exquisite Beer

ON THE BEAM

BY WAYNE PARRISH



The end of the oil slick is the "end of the trail" for this Jap destroyer, shown as it received its deathblow in the Battle of the Bismarck Sea.

New Cargo Plane

A new cargo airplane has been designed to permit the easy handling of aerial freight through a large door at the after end of the fuselage. The tail surfaces are completely independent of the fuselage, in contrast to the conventional airplane, for they are attached to booms running out from the wings. Thus a truck can back up to the fuselage and unload freight directly into the cargo cabin.

The same hydraulic system used to raise the big cargo door extends a collapsible loading ramp which can be adjusted to run to the ground or to the platform of a truck. Due to the tricycle landing gear, the plane remains in level or flight position during loading operations. Thus automobiles or trailers can be wheeled right into the ship with ease.

The designer of this new cargo airplane is Willem D. Van Zelm, of the engineering department of the Glenn L. Martin Company at Baltimore. Two models have been designed, for two or four engines, the smaller with a gross weight of 60,000 pounds, and the larger with a gross weight of 86,000 pounds. The latter would have a cargo pay load of 27,000 pounds, or 13½ tons.

Army Air Line

Just to show how things can get all mixed up in a co-operative war effort, the Army Air Forces is operating a passenger, freight, and mail air line in England! There are so many Army and Air Forces bases and camps in England that some system had to be devised to tie them together, so the Eighth Air Force Service Command organized its own air transport service, which daily operates about 2,000 route miles.

It's handy for visiting Army officials, too, for the air line hits every important base. Pilot crews are easily shifted from one part of the Isles to another. Mail is not only picked up and delivered from one base to another, but gathered up at all points for shipment to the United States.

Cargo is especially important. If one A. A. F. base lacks a vital spare part, it can have one within a few hours from another base several hundred miles away. Heading this U. S. air line in England is Colonel Leslie P. Arnold, one of the original round-the-world Army flyers who has long been associated with air lines in America. His last position before returning to the Army was as assistant to Captain Eddie V. Rickenbacker, president of Eastern Air Lines.

Production Comparisons

The statisticians are working overtime these days on Allied and Axis production of munitions, and not the least interesting result of the calculations pertains to production of airplanes.

One such study showed that from January, 1938, through July, 1943, the Allies had produced approximately 215,000 airplanes, while the Axis had produced only 144,000, which left a margin favorable to the Allies of more than 70,000 airplanes.

But the Allies' rate of production is constantly increasing, while the Axis has reached its peak. Thus by the end of 1943 the Allies will have produced about 265,000 airplanes and the Axis about 160,000—or a favorable margin of about 110,000.

This is a far cry from the situation in January, 1941, when the Allies had only produced something over 40,000 airplanes and the Axis had turned out more than 55,000. The real turning point didn't come until January and February of 1942, at which time our total aircraft matched the total aircraft produced by the Axis. It was in November, 1940, that both Allies and Axis were producing at the same rate.

Total production figures are interesting, but more important at this stage of the war is the rate of losses, now that our production has zoomed upward. The Axis may have produced over 200,000 aircraft in five and a half years, but the losses have been staggering. It would be intriguing to know how many first-line planes Germany has ready for action right now. The number is dwindling daily.

Bomb Service

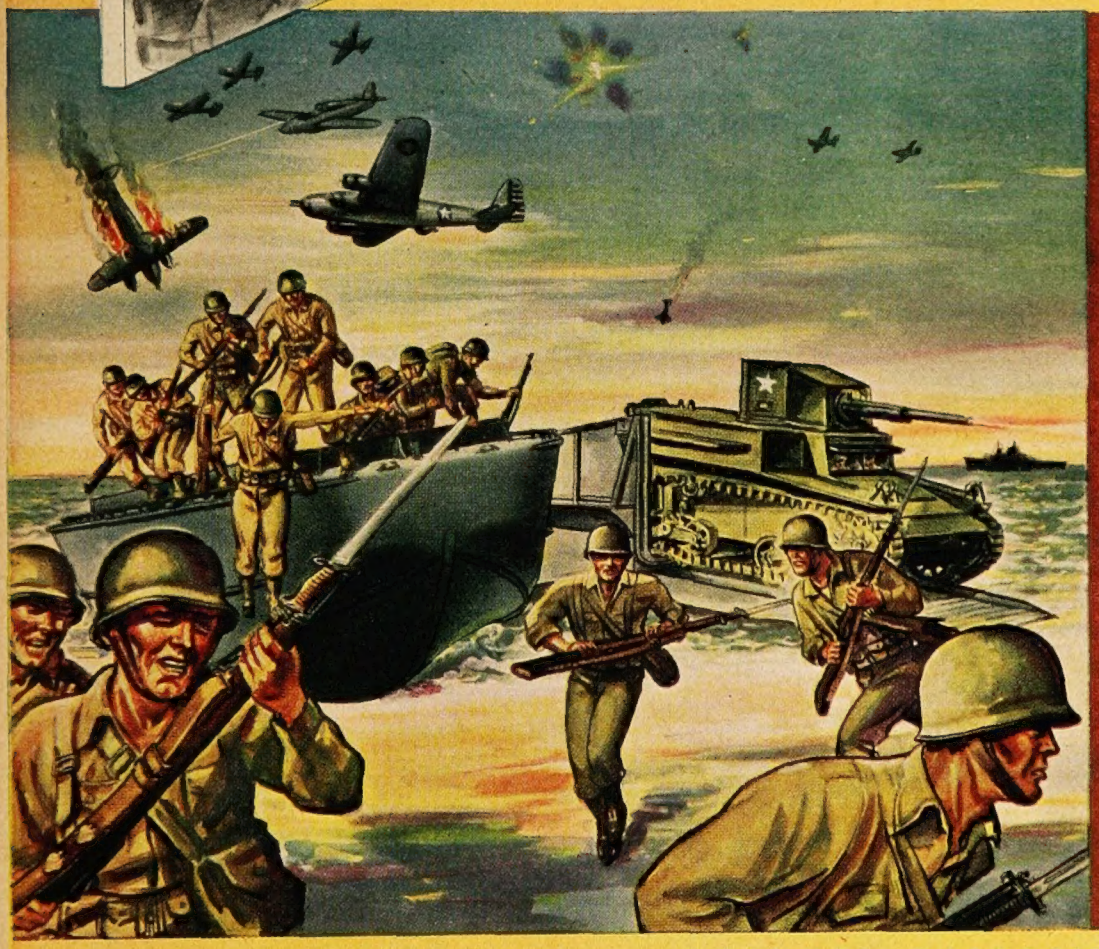
If you wonder who does the work of supplying the thousands of tons of bombs for air raids, it's the Army Ordnance that carries this tremendous load. The Aviation-Ordnance section attached to every Army Air Forces group delivers the bombs, ranging in size from small incendiary types to the huge block busters. A. A. F. crews lift and attach them to the shackles in the bomb bays of the ships. When delivered the bombs have their pins attached, the nose and tail fuses inserted and made reasonably safe for the air crew by the inclusion of an arming wire.

In so far as fuses are concerned, the contact type of nose fuse, which detonates on contact, is the most popular. The firing pin, or trigger, is kept in a safe position by several cams, which are in turn held by a screw propeller. The arming wire prevents the revolving or unscrewing of the propeller until the airplane is over the target.

Upon dropping the bomb, the arming wire is pulled out. The bomb starts on its way with fuse propeller whirling. A few turns, and the propeller drops off, the cams fall out, and the firing pin is exposed.

To ensure that the bomb is not a "dud," there is also a tail fuse which functions upon impact. As a result, there are comparatively few bombs which do not explode upon hitting their objective.

"We took the Beaches with Higgins Boats"



"Without the boats that Higgins is manufacturing the Combined Operations Command could not exist."
—LORD MOUNTBATTEN

AFRICA! SOLOMONS!! CHANNEL RAIDS!!! ATTU!!!!

"These Higgins boats are so tough they land directly on rocky beaches, unload troops, tanks and equipment dry-shod, retrieving themselves by their own power. They're plenty fast in assault, can turn on a dime to zig-zag away from trouble, and I never saw one capsize."

HIGGINS BOATS designed and built for the United Nations were described thus by veterans of Guadalcanal and Africa, who also said, in official records, that these boats were the "Best in the World." This praise comes from men who manned them under fire—from men whose lives often depended upon these boats' unusual maneuverability, stamina and trouble-free operation.

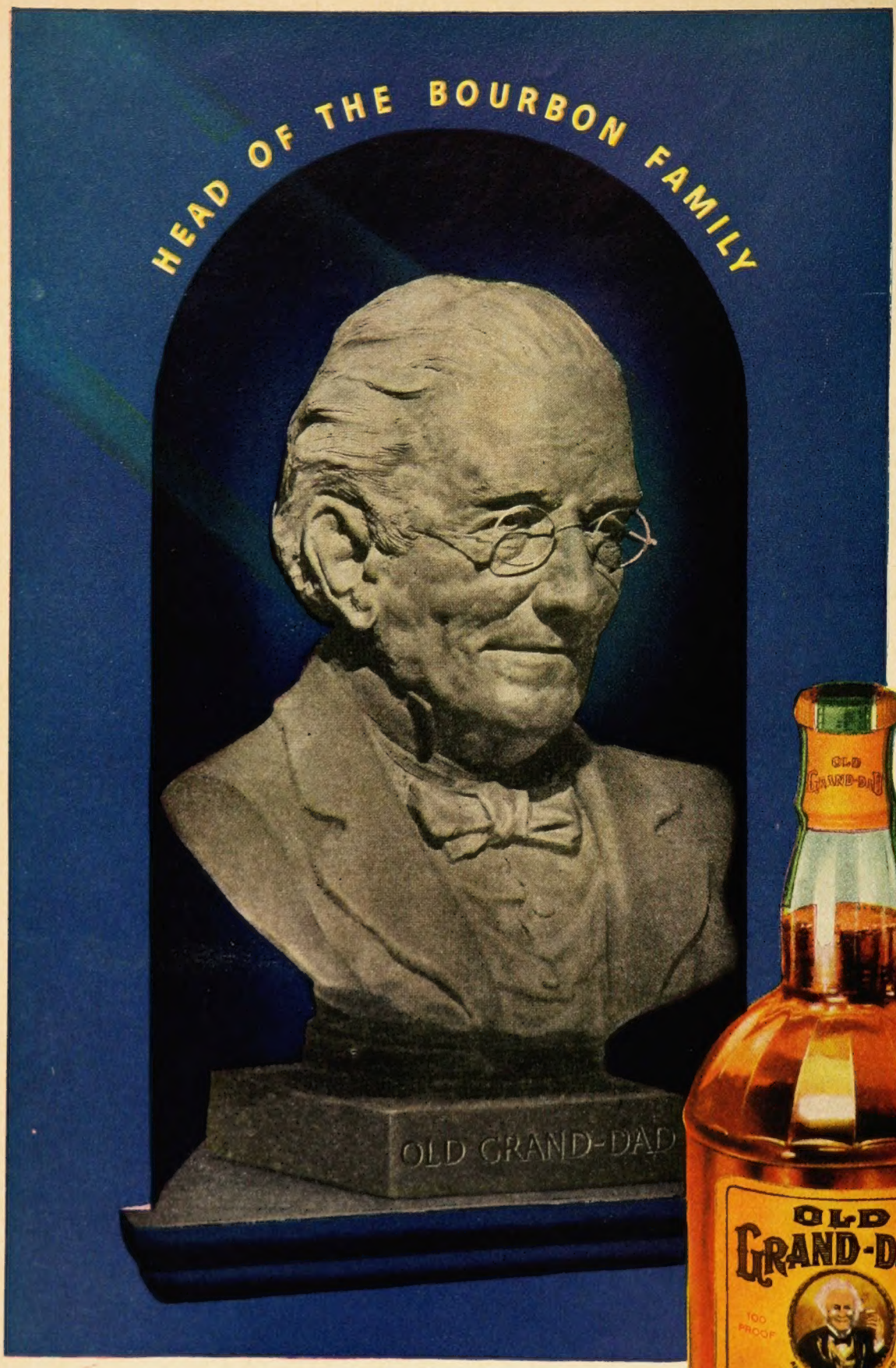
Today Higgins plants are engaged the clock around in manufacturing boats, planes and other products to meet the swiftly changing needs of nations at war. It is this ability to change—to pioneer—to anticipate tomorrow's needs—that makes "Higgins" a name to watch when the war is won.

Higgins
INDUSTRIES INCORPORATED

NEW ORLEANS
HUB OF THE AMERICAS

★

BOATS • ENGINES • AIRPLANES • WOOD ALLOYS



ONE TASTE WILL TELL YOU WHY

This Whiskey is 4 Years Old

IT TAKES but one taste to show why we want to make present stocks of Old Grand-Dad last out the duration. So when your licensed dealer is sold out, remember—his supply is being limited now so that it may be kept continuous. The best way to get fine whiskies you can trust is to call again when his next shipment comes in.

The Old Grand-Dad Distillery Co. is engaged in production of alcohol for war purposes. This whiskey was made before America entered the war.

National Distillers Products Corporation, New York

Liberty
THE MAGAZINE OF A FREE PEOPLE

Automobiles formerly came down this assembly line. Will Germany's collapse start them down again?

CAN WE EASE UP AFTER HITLER'S DEFEAT?

BY SIDNEY SHALETT

THE pot is boiling in Washington on a question which may develop into one of the major domestic problems of 1944: *If Germany goes down before Japan, what will it mean to the civilian population of the United States?*

There is dynamite—both military and political—in this question. Many of the top-ranking military and government leaders, whose decisions will govern the answers to it, will not discuss it for the record. A number of them tartly suggest that "we still have a war to win" and that it is no time to be discussing postwar plans.

But with bureaus, groups, and individuals making plans for postwar prospects, with leaders from President Roosevelt down focusing public attention on the issue, and with Germany's reasonably early defeat appearing possible, the question simply will not be downed.

The best available opinion in the wartime capital holds that if Germany does go down first, as anticipated by our military and naval leaders (who planned it that way), it will mean a number of breaks for the goods-pinched and food-short civilian. It should be stated emphatically, however, that the "breaks" will be but a light sprinkle rather than a good all-day shower to relieve the drought. Things should ease up a trifle in the field of some of the durable goods, with first priorities going, perhaps, to refrigerators, washing machines, and various electric appliances—in which there have been acute famines.

The beginning of the big drive against Japan undoubtedly will spell a switch in our manufacturing of weapons. Emphasis will be placed on huge long-range bombers, amphibious equipment, and certain other types. Some items now manufactured in quantity for the war against the Nazis can be reduced. This undoubtedly will release some of the manufacturing facilities that certain Washington production officials would like to see converted back to making refrigerators and washing machines for the people.

That gasoline and fuel-oil rationing will be altered much is rather doubtful. The war against Japan will be largely a naval and an air war—which means continued high gasoline and fuel-oil consumption.

It is just as unlikely, if not more so, that there will be any great change in the food situation. It must be remembered that the victorious United Nations will have starving Europe on their hands.

One of the most delicate prospective problems is whether it will be necessary to continue to

(*Continued on page 28*)

Soon Germany's number will be up. How will it affect you? What happens to rationing, the draft, and business when we have only Japan left to lick?

THE STAR OF SARUNAGI

A Navy nurse and nineteen men, marooned on a desolate isle, match their wits and courage against the ruthless Japs in a story both tender and thrill-packed

BY JACLAND MARMUR

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK GODWIN

JOHNNY ROSTROM'S story is an old tale now in the ships and all the harbors of the South Pacific fleets. His name has come to be the byword for a fabulous good fortune. Johnny Rostrom's luck!

An Australian corvette skipper picked him up off Bathurst Island in the cruel days when Corregidor was bleeding. The Australians almost blew him from the water with a three-inch shell, because in early daylight on a wine-dark sea the lookout made out that speck against a thin horizon line to be a lugsailed motor whaler with Jap markings on her bows. But they saw the men she carried and the Yankee ensign just in time. So they put the rescue nettings over while that haggard fellow in the whaler's stern sheets with the tiller bar between his knees luffed smartly. And he rounded under the corvette's quarter, hailing her bridge.

"Johnny Rostrom, U. S. Navy, bosun's mate first class!" he called up in a loud clear voice. "Permission is requested, sir, to come on board."

"Of course! But where the devil did you get that rotten craft?"

"We knocked a Jap destroyer over. Up Sarunagi way. Wakatake class. This was her landing boat."

"You—" The skipper gasped, incredulous, while his mind went swiftly through his South Sea islands memories. Sarunagi? Odd name. Then a mental shutter clicked. *Sarunagi!* There was a Sarunagi Island off Mindanao's southern tip. But that was over a thousand miles up north! "Do you mean to say," he fairly roared, "that you've sailed that hull through all the islands from the Philippines to here?"

"Aye, sir," Johnny Rostrom said, not without some pride, hanging grimly to the edge of physical endurance. "But we never could have, sir, except we had Andromeda to help us."

"You had—" The skipper cut his amazed explosion short. Andromeda was an astral constellation of the north. You couldn't even see it in these latitudes! Poor devils! So he murmured, "Ah, yes," nodding gravely to that weathered sailor face. "Well done, Rostrom. We'll soon have you snug aboard."

But the first lieutenant, broadly grinning, put it in clearer words: "Well, blast my eyes! Imagine making a proper landfall with navigation like that! He must have used a ouija board! It's just blooming Yankee luck, that's all."

So the yarn went around like wildfire into every gun-room mess. From Port Darwin clear to Sydney. From Tulagi to the Cape. How Johnny Rostrom, needing a sea boat, had knocked a Jap destroyer over up Sarunagi way. Just like that! And then had sailed better than a thousand miles through Jap-infested Molukka Passage and across the Banda Sea, steering by a constellation that wasn't even in the sky! And made Bathurst Island like he'd had it on a string!

NO wonder, when the Zeros start their shrill dive-bombing scream, that every 20-mm. gunner with his burning eyes aloft can grin for an instant, hoping he'll rate some luck like Johnny Rostrom's. And hoping he'll get the Navy Cross besides. The admiral himself pinned it on Johnny's chest. But Johnny wasn't a hero. He was just a Mission District kid from Frisco with laughing steel-gray eyes, a wide contagious grin, and sandy-colored hair.

"Hell," said Johnny later in the guinea pullman mess, "I'm a sailor. Tin-can man. A sailor ought to take his chances with the sea." And he added, grinning sheepishly, "Andy and me, we thought the same."

Oddly enough, those fellows didn't think it strange to hear him talk like that about a star. They could understand a seaman's kinship to the trusted constellations, having often looked aloft with gratitude themselves. But, of course, Johnny wasn't talking about a star at all. Not the way they thought. He was talking about Andy Hale. And Andy was a girl with a rich red mouth in a lovely oval face, a pert small nose, and the cleanest, gentlest eyes you ever saw. They made you feel whole in a cracked-up world. They believed in good things, Andy's blue-water eyes, and when they looked in yours you believed in them too.

That's what Johnny Rostrom thought, finding her kneeling at his side in darkness when he washed ashore out of the blasted destroyer U. S. S. Paul Kane after floating around the Celebes Sea on what was left of that four-pipe destroyer's wardroom door.

"Take it easy, Johnny," he heard her saying in a low and throaty voice. "Your leg got banged up on the beach rocks before we could drag you out. Here." She held a pannikin of steaming rice soup to his lips. "Drink this."

"How the blazes did *you* get here?" Johnny wanted to know.

"We happened to be swimming this way, so we thought we'd drop in."

"We?"

She nodded quickly. "Sergeant Larry Lewis, Corporal Rusty, sixteen men of the Second Artillery from Panay—and me. We washed up four days ago." Then she added with taut quiet, "There were some wounded who made it too, but—"

"Oh," said Johnny, as she let her head drop suddenly so he could see star points glittering in her tawny hair. It would look wonderful, he thought, with hot sunlight on it; it would have a warm delicious scent. But now she was silently sobbing. "Here, don't do that," he said. "You'll be all right."

Her small fine head snapped up. Her blue eyes burned. Did he think she was blubbering about herself? "We were coming down in an Iloilo bêche-de-mer schooner," she said fiercely, "evacuating sixty-odd wounded with us, when the bombers came at dusk. We got them safely away in the boats." Her voice shook with cold white rage. "But the bombers came back low after the schooner sank, machine-gunning. I saw those boys—" She stopped. Her small hands fluttered in her lap. "You're on Sarunagi Island, Rostrom, with eighteen Army boys and myself. We've got food and some arms. But we can't get away. We've got no boat."

"That's dandy," Johnny Rostrom mumbled, gulping the hot weak soup. "How did you know my name?"

"It's stenciled on your singlet."

"What's a girl like you doing, nosing at men's singlets?"

Quick laughter bubbled behind her eyes. "I had to tear it up to bandage your leg. Together," she added ruefully, "with all that was left of my only slip."

"That's pretty fancy company," Johnny grinned, "for a Navy issue singlet. Do they print your name on them things too?"

She frowned severely. And then at last Johnny saw her sudden smile. "My name is Andy," she told him.

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He pressed a service automatic into Johnny's hand. "We think a lot of Andy. You take care of her for us."

WAITING FOR THE GENERAL

Major General Lewis H. Brereton, U. S. Commander in the Middle East, gets plenty off his chest in a remarkably frank interview with our Cairo correspondent

BY ERIKA MANN

Radioed from Cairo.

HAD I known then what I know now, I might not have had the nerve even to apply for an interview with the general. And if by some puckish coincidence I had chosen to put my last question first, it might have remained my last. Upon receiving his answer, I might have departed in a rush.

But this is no way to tell a story. I'd better start with the beginning and recall how, shortly after the historic raid on Rome, I determined to go and see Major General Lewis H. Brereton, Commanding General of the U. S. Army Forces in the Middle East.

I knew that the general, whose Ninth U. S. Air Force had just helped destroy Mussolini's Littorio marshaling yards, would be exceedingly busy, and that two or three days might pass before he'd be able to receive me. While waiting for orders from his headquarters I did not dare to leave Cairo. Whoever called to invite me for tea, show me the Pyramids, or take me for a camel ride was invariably told that I was waiting for the general and consequently unable to accept any social engagements. As time went by and one week spent in expectation was followed by a second, my friends and colleagues started shaking their experienced heads over me.

"You'll never make it, my dear," they said cheerfully.

Momentous events occurred while I was waiting. Il Duce fell, Orel fell, Catania fell, and Badoglio was in the process of falling.

Our own theater of operations, however, was not in the center of events. Colonel Parham, the public relations officer in charge, rightly assumed a distinct Santa Claus attitude as one fine day he disclosed that something big was cooking in the Middle East. Our excitement was considerable and much hard guesswork was being done. The more ambitious among us were seen to prepare any number of speculative cables, at least one of which, they figured, was bound to hit the nail squarely on the head. The NBC and CBS men arranged for special bookings and everybody got ready to dispatch the news with the utmost velocity.

But the handouts we were given when the great moment had finally come contained no news whatever. Instead, we read a tiresome description of the city of Ploesti and its famous refineries. The actual story, we were told, would break at 8 P. M. Not a thing broke at eight, nor had anything broken at nine thirty, for which time Winston Burdett's radio show had been scheduled. I walked over with him to Radio House and listened to London conversing with Cairo, New York talking to London, and everybody awaiting our news. Winston, unable even to say that the real thing wasn't out yet, spoke briefly on the Italo-German tension in Greece, and we both suffered a little under the thought of how crazy he must seem to Columbia, who'd taken somebody else off the air to make place for his momentous announcement.

At ten the first official communiqué of the spectacular raid on the Ploesti refineries was finally released, and while the success of the enterprise could not yet have been determined, it became clear that the dash and

Major General Lewis H. Brereton.

On August 1 low-ranging American Liberator bombers blasted Ploesti, Rumania, and struck a major blow at the oil resources of the Axis.

daring shown by the Ploesti raiders was comparable only to the bravery displayed by the English destroyers of the German Eder and Möhne dams. The heroes of Ploesti came and talked to us. Their accounts, delivered in a calm, restrained, and objective way, nevertheless rang with tension and drama. There was no bragging, not even much of that understating idiom in which airmen will describe the most fearful battle as "a bit of trouble" and the most devastating enemy barrage as "a lot of silly stuff flying."

"Artists," said the major who'd led one of the formations, "are fond of depicting air attacks as veritable infernos with all hell breaking loose wherever you look, with planes crashing into each other, planes exploding in mid-air, planes plunging down on burning houses, with red-hot debris being thrown up sky-high, pillars of black smoke and reddish flames shooting upward, and disaster engulfing the whole confounded scene. Well, I've always admired those artists for their gruesome imagination rather than for their love of truth. Real raids don't look like that. I've been in many, and none of them ever did.

"But this Ploesti show came as close to that sort of inferno as anything could. I hadn't thought I'd ever see such hell, nor do I want ever to see it again."

"The heat developed by our fires," said another, "was so intense it created something like a tropical storm which made steady flying kind of difficult. When one of the oil towers exploded, its roof came up dancing on top of a colossal pillar of flames."

It was a moving and rather upsetting experience to listen to those grim young Americans as they tried to describe the indescribable. They looked strained and tired and they talked in low, slightly veiled voices.

The Ploesti attack was of an utterly new, entirely unheard-of character. Day raids by large formations of planes are rarely executed on a level as low as this was and, more particularly, neither the Liberators nor their crews had ever gone through anything even remotely similar. Months of general preparation and ten days of special training preceded the attack, for which the machines had been equipped with new low-level bomb sights. Despite all this, however, the airmen knew that the ghost Ploesti they had built in the desert and on whose mock refineries they were dropping their dummy bombs was but an impotent shadow, unable to give them a foretaste of what the real Ploesti would be like. Besides, how would the weather behave, and would it permit the whole lot of them to meet over the target at the appointed moment?

IT did not, alas, and while the entire force should have cleared the target area within one minute, the last of the Liberators appeared on the spot thirty minutes after the first group had left. Delayed-action bombs planted by those who had arrived early exploded in the faces of the latecomers.

"It was most unpleasant," one of them said in conclusion, "but then, we knew it would be. We also knew it was necessary and important, and I believe I speak for us all when I say we're satisfied with what we've done."

The others nodded gravely. Then pictures were taken of the group and some of the men tried to smile but didn't quite succeed, nor did any of us feel like molesting them with questions. Quietly we departed.

In my room at Shepheard's Hotel, a telephone message awaited me. General Brereton would see me on Friday at 10 A. M.! Needless to say, I appeared at headquarters at nine thirty sharp. The general, I was informed, had gone out and was not apt to return this morning.

"Swell," I told the abashed aide-de-camp. "I'll wait, then."

While waiting, I tried to remember what I knew of the general. He was fifty-three. His home town was Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. When he was thirteen his family moved to Annapolis, Maryland, where he later attended the U. S. Naval Academy. He graduated in 1911, but soon resigned from the Navy to accept a commission in the Army. His real interest lay in the air, and as early as 1912 he became one of the pioneers of American aviation.

The Distinguished Service Cross, the Croix de Guerre with three palms, and the Legion of Honor are among the many citations he carried home from World War 1. When questioned as to how he earned these honors, he is wont to say, "I was flying like hell to get home and a lot of Huns got in my way."

From 1919 to 1923 he was air attaché at the American Embassy in Paris. Then he felt homesick for the air, and he has been flying ever since. In October, 1941, he was commanding the Third Air Force at Tampa, Florida, but by the end of that month he'd moved to Manila to assume command of the American Air Forces in the Far East. On Christmas morning he took off to join General Wavell in Java, and he arrived at Surabaya just in time for Christmas dinner.

When by the middle of February all hope of holding Java had vanished, Brereton accompanied General Wavell to India. There he re-created his Air Force to strike at the Japs through China. Painfully, gradually his staff reassembled and men and ships were put at his disposal. Not

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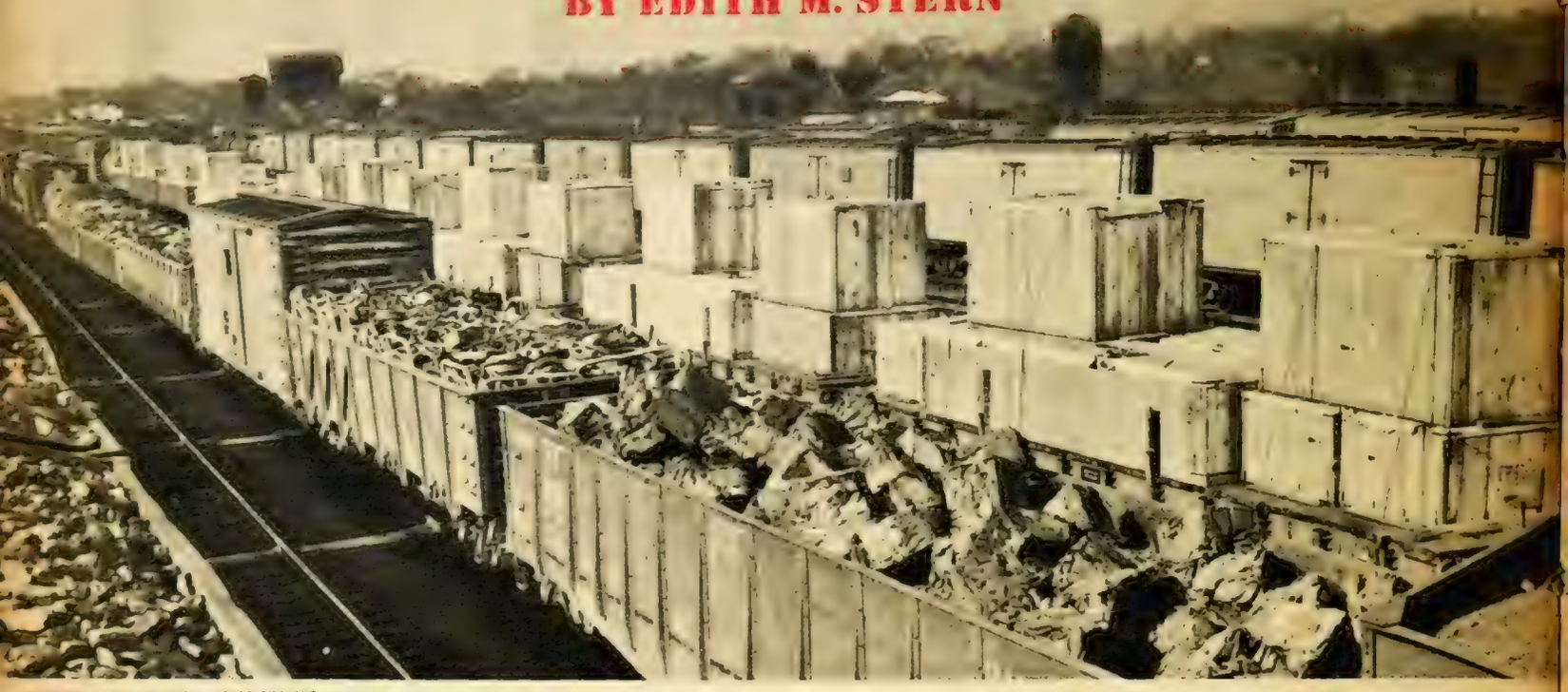
INDUSTRY'S CINDERELLA

BY EDITH M. STERN



PICTURES FROM CHARLES PHELPS CUSHING

Coal, scrap iron, crated planes, refrigerated food—all part of the colossal freight of modern war.

It's junk to you but bread and butter to more than 200,000 dealers. The fascinating story of scrap iron, steel's poor but necessary relation

RECENTLY, when a consignment of scrap rolled up to a steel mill, a dead horse was found reposing atop one carload of assorted rails and battered automobile parts.

"Hey, Joe," the mill's purchasing agent said jokingly to the scrap dealer, "are we supposed to weigh in that horse?"

"H'm," chuckled Joe. "He still has his shoes, so why are you kicking?"

The incident is typical of what goes on between steel mills and scrap dealers. No love is lost between them, yet neither can get along without the other. The giant steel mills are dependent on the scrap industry for 25 per cent of their raw material. The scrap industry is dependent on steel for its market. Steel complains that Scrap chisels on quality, sometimes loads cars with the best grade of scrap on top. Scrap rejoins that Steel uses unfounded accusations of "below grade" as an alibi for reneging on contracted prices. But this is just the byplay that can be found in any lively business relationship.

The scrap industry deals in the purchase, processing, and resale of junked iron and steel. It does a business estimated at half a billion dollars a year. Some 200,000 individuals are engaged in it. It has its barons and commoners: its wholesalers and retailers: its collectors and processors: its general practitioners, and specialists in horseshoes, ships, or barges. Once despised as scavenging, the industry is today a vital part of the war effort. Victory requires armaments, armaments require steel, and steelmaking requires scrap.

There is a simple reason why steelmaking requires scrap. Pig iron, produced from ore in a preliminary refining process in a blast furnace, is brittle, unworkable. Before it becomes steel it goes into an open-hearth furnace, where it must be mixed with purifying agents and scrap. The scrap—previously manufactured iron and steel—is low in carbon, silicon, phosphorus, and sulphur (all poisonous to steel in large quantities). Mixed in about 45:55 proportion with pig iron, it greatly reduces the necessary quantity of purifiers otherwise needed to manufacture steel.

Besides, the scrap is already with us. It lies in auto graveyards, in demolished buildings. It is spewed forth from machines as metal sawdust and shavings. It is abandoned mine machinery, obsolete railway equipment, torn-down elevated railroads.

Household scrap, light stuff, ordinarily of little interest to either dealer or mill, is the least of what goes into the white-hot furnaces, but your efforts in ransacking your kitchen or attic were not in vain. The nation-wide scrap drive carried us through a serious shortage last winter. But, ordinarily, about half of all the scrap used in steelmaking is a by-product of steelmaking itself—the shearings from ingots, and rejections. Of the other half, today about 70 per cent is "industrial scrap" disgorged from plants, from railroads, from mines. All scrap obtained by the steel mills from outside sources is called "purchase scrap." And that's where the people in the scrap industry come in.

Small fry, most of them. Take, first, a reminiscent look at the humble characters at the bottom of the hierarchy—the "junkies," once familiar figures with their skinny nags, their wagons, and their jangling bells. They paid you a few cents for your junk, and perhaps you envisioned their reselling it for fortune. But,

Lake vessels carrying scrap iron from

actually, the business was never lucrative. The junky who remained a junky averaged no more than seventeen to twenty-eight dollars a week, and now he has gone the war-plant way of other low-paid folk.

So have the individuals on the next rung of the scrap ladder, the collectors. They differ from the peddler junkies in having regular routes and sources, and in manning trucks. The low margin of their profits, the tire and gas troubles they've been having lately, even as you and I, are eliminating them, too.

MINOR characters also, in the drama of scrap, are some 6,000 junk dealers, proprietors of dingy shops where they house a miscellaneous collection of castoffs, from rags to bottles and from brass plumbing fixtures to worn rubber boots. They dispose of their scrap to a local foundry, or ship it to larger out-of-town dealers who have room for it in yards. The amount of their income tax is no problem to them, either.

When you go higher up the scale, "red metals" (brass, copper), "white metals" (tin, aluminum, zinc, Babbitt metal), and "junk" (miscellaneous waste materials) have their specialists. Dealers in scrap—that is, iron and steel exclusively—numbered 1,851 in the 1939 census.

Scrap dealers walk on a tight rope of shrewd appraisal, having to guess tomorrow's value of prepared scrap in purchasing today's old jaloppies, obsolete railroad equipment, and other scrap. Purely through both sad and profitable experience, a dealer learns to know his stuff. No university gives a course in scrapology, nor does laboratory testing come into the picture.

Scrap does have a trade association, however—the Institute of Scrap Iron and Steel. It was organized in 1928 by a young New York lawyer, Benjamin Schwartz, who quit its direction to serve with the Office of Economic Warfare. He was succeeded by Edwin C. Baringer, later made president, who met his first scrap dealers when he was reporting for steel-trade journals—and liked them. He continued to meet and to like them when he became editor of Steel and Daily Metal Trade. Today, suave, keen, and eloquent, he speaks for the industry to which, unlike most of his organization's membership, he came as an outsider.

All scrap dealers live in hopes of a "sleeper," an unanticipated profit, and once in about five lot purchases or demolitions they get it. There was, for instance, that chimney in an abandoned building. Used way back for metal refining, it had a queer gray internal coating that turned out to be platinum. And then there was the hold of an old German passenger liner which contained, not the usual low-grade cast-iron ballast, but ballast rich in manganese.

More usual finds, however, are the units of plants that can be sold as is, the broken-down machines that can be reconditioned by the dealer's maintenance man. Occasionally, of course, a dealer guesses wrong. An old-timer, for instance, recently congratulated himself for disposing of a rusted silver-plated pheasant for five dollars. An antique, it was worth nearer $100. But, by and large, "reusables" give a heartening financial lift to the small per ton profits realizable from scrap. "Once in forty years," the saying goes in the trade, "you can find a customer for everything."

One deterrent to large per ton profits is the expense of processing, the dealer's responsibility. Cranes with huge clamshell buckets move the scrap about the yard. Other cranes, equipped with "pancake" magnets, pick up, swing, and drop onto loading cars masses of pipes and rails as a toy magnet moves hairpins. Giant "alligator shears" clamp down on steel sheets and tubes, cut them into the three- or four-foot lengths right for the furnaces. Great iron balls, dropped from magnets, smash heavy castings. Oxyacetylene torches do welding in reverse, cut rails apart.

Most elaborate gadgets of all are hydraulic "bundling" presses. Their machinery fills small buildings hard by concrete pits. I saw an automobile frame dropped into a bundling pit. A cover slid over; machinery hummed. A few moments later the cover slid back, and out of the pit a crane lifted a rectangular solid metal mass about the size of an orange crate. Almost before the "bundle" had been dropped into a loading car, a load of iron bedsteads succeeded it in the pit, came out identical with the metamorphosed car frame.

When I asked the reason for the compression, I was told, "For more economical melting. Loose scrap goes up like powder."

Still another crimp in profits comes from the high workers' compensation costs in scrap yards. In some states they amount to one fifth of total labor costs. They're understandable. A yard is a terrifying inferno of weird twisted rust-reddened shapes piled hill-high; of yawning sharp metallic jaws; of menacing masses overhead; of swinging apparatus; and of apparently about-to-fly-off-the-magnet jagged steel ribbons and formidable iron bars.

WHEN you come to the top layer of the industry, however, even fifty cents per ton profit adds up. In 1939 fifty-one firms reported a gross business of over $1,000,000.

The plutocracy of scrap are, curiously, called "brokers," though they bear little resemblance to brokers in any other kind of business. What they are, actually, is a strange admixture of wholesaler, retailer, and commercial banker. They guarantee a steady market to smaller dealers, plants, auto graveyards, and wrecking companies by contracting to take all of their scrap. They assure supply to steel mills, spare them the necessity for shopping, by contracting to deliver estimated scrap requirements for a period. They finance smaller

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roit to the blast furnaces of Cleveland.

The razing of the Sixth Avenue El in New York provided an enormous source of scrap.

INSIDE STORY

Two-Gun Wesley was a movie star and lots of girls loved him, but one made up her mind to do something about it—with completely unexpected results

BY FAITH BALDWIN

ILLUSTRATED BY PAT HOLBROOKE

I SUPPOSE some years ago you read about Two-Gun Wesley and Vickie Vaughan in the fan magazines and movie columns. I did, and every time I saw an item I cut it out for my scrapbook. I wanted something I could read by the fire, look and laugh at long and hard enough to scare the daylights out of the cat.

This is the real story. You won't find it in any magazine devoted to dishing the glamour.

It begins about twenty years ago when Vickie was born. Only her name wasn't Vickie, and it wasn't Vaughan. She was christened Martha Henrietta, and her last name was Smith.

She had a bang-up christening in a big church, a couple of godmothers, one of them worth her weight in gold—and she weighed two hundred and fifty in the naked flesh, bone dry—and a godfather who owned so many railroads that his gifts included a block of stock and a private car, tenderly named Little Martha. The other godmother was a schoolteacher. She didn't have a cent beyond her salary, but Mrs. Smith, who had gone to school with her back in the old days, believed in a leaven of common sense and genteel poverty.

The Smiths were—and are—extraordinarily rich. Ulysses started, after high school, as a plumber's assistant. Eventually he owned the shop and finally the sort of factory which turns out utilitarian equipment, in pastel colors, or green-veined marble, or ebon black. It wasn't a romantic business but it certainly paid off.

Marty was the only child, born long before Mrs. Smith—née Hagstratter—had become resigned to raising show Pekingese and heading charity committees. When the Smiths moved to New York, where Ulysses owned an office building the lower floor of which was devoted to a colorful display of his wares, no one had even heard of them—that is to say, as people. But Melanie had a lot of drive. She engaged the right secretary and made the right contributions. She rarely if ever made a mistake. Too, she was a pretty woman.

By the time Marty was fifteen the Smiths had places in Connecticut, North Carolina, Cape Cod, and Miami Beach and Melanie had made many friends. A few of them were active, important women to whom the Social Register was a studbook for upstarts, the possession of money an adjunct to civilized living and an opportunity to help those less fortunate, and the mention of one's name in society columns an affront.

Every July the Smiths went to the Cape, where they stayed for six weeks and swam, picnicked, fished, sailed, and motorboated and Marty ran bare-legged and brown with the other kids. In her fifteenth year she saw Two-Gun Wesley for the first time.

She and her gang station-wagoned to the early show in the nearest motion-picture house. It was Saturday night and the house was packed. There were two features, a newsreel, a cartoon, an educational short, and a serial. Mr. Smith, who drove the car and chaperoned, perceived that he would emerge from the evening's entertainment with a searing headache and partial loss of vision. So he closed his afflicted eyes. Hence he missed the spectacle of his only child falling in love during the sixth installment of Two-Gun Gets His Man.

Martha sat on the edge of her seat, her long legs wound around each other, her jaws moving rhythmically as she masticated a large hunk of gum presented to her by an adorer. Marty had plenty of beaux, as at fifteen she was about the prettiest thing you've ever seen. Her hair, dark and shining, curled on her slim shoulders. Her wide gray eyes were fixed with a fatal fascination on the screen, where Two-Gun fired faultlessly from the hip, capturing cattle rustlers singlehanded, hanging over cliffs, trapped in the bottom of mines, avoiding sudden death by the breadth of a cat's whiskers. He was a lanky young man with curly hair, an engaging grin. He was also bowlegged. He rode like a centaur and shot like the F. B. I. He was some punkins.

That summer on every Saturday night thereafter Martha managed to attend another installment of Two-Gun's nervous and menaced life. She also experienced her first kiss, administered by an old man of eighteen about to enter Princeton in the fall. She found out that if she closed her eyes and imagined the donor Two-Gun, it was wonderful. Pre-Princeton muttered, "Gee, Marty, you're keen. I'm nuts about you," in the approved romantic fashion, but Marty translated it into the mellifluous language of her screen idol. Instead of Homer's flights of fancy, she heard Two-Gun's deep drawling voice. "Gal," he was saying—"gal, yo're as purty as a prairie flower, as sweet as sage honey. I love you, gal. You've got me roped and tied for life."

The Smiths returned to town, and Marty went off to her first year at a good boarding school. But although the girls in Miss Finley's establishment did not attend the cinema unless important and educational, Marty managed to keep up with Two-Gun by means of secreted fan magazines. Now and then he rated an item and, as time went on, even a story, complete with picture posed affectionately with guns, lariat, sagebrush background, and horse. For Two-Gun had graduated from serials into B pictures. His fan mail increased. Marty wrote him faithfully once a week. She signed them, "Your adoring admirer," because, to her, it was the height of romanticism to remain anonymous.

SHE pictured his death at a distant date in the Foreign Legion. By then he would have become tired of it all, the adulation, the women flinging themselves at his high-heeled feet. He would cross the seas to fight for something or other and die in the desert. But not alone. Some one would be with him. Not Miss Dietrich, not Miss Garbo. This was no motion picture; it was life. Marty would be there in the uniform of a Red Cross nurse. She would moisten his parched lips with water, stanch his lifeblood, hear his last words. "Gal," he would murmur—"gal, yo're purty as a prairie flower."

She organized a Two-Gun club, kept a scrapbook, saw Mr. Wesley's masterpieces a dozen times or more. And eventually Mr. Wesley graduated from B into A. His fan mail was the largest in Hollywood, he owned a ranch on which he raised blooded stock, his horse Buddy as famous as he. Buddy set his hoofprints into the soft cement at Grauman's Chinese at the same time that Two-Gun imprinted his silver-studded heels and his strong brown hands.

His delighted employers had discovered his voice. This he had, to be sure, operated in speaking lines for a number of years and occasionally he had raised it in song around the

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He donated his time to the test. In the love scenes he was very convincing, and Marty wasn't bad either.

HATE IS STRONGER THAN LOVE

It was Paris all right—the gay city they once knew together—but the Nazi colonel didn't know hate blots out tender memories

Liberty's SHORT, SHORT STORY

BY LYON MEARSON

ILLUSTRATED BY SEYMOUR BALL

PARIS under the occupation is not as gloomy a place as one might imagine. Pleasure has always been a business with the French, and it is easier to continue the conduct of a business than an emotion. The Métro runs, the music halls go on, the cafés are having a boom, the theaters still produce plays about married Frenchmen torn by the pangs of jealousy, and elderly women with decided mustaches still sell flowers at the side of the Madeleine. One tourist's occupation francs are as good as another's, and while it is true that the tourists in Paris wear uniforms and boots, they still want pleasure. Pleasure is what Paris has always had to sell, and if occupation francs are all you can get for it—well, what would you?

Outside the small café off the Rue Lepic the perpetual late autumn drizzle, with its penetrating cold, blackened the sidewalks and rattled on the awning. Inside, the lights were already giving out the greenish yellow glare that reminded Clarice Legendre of Van Gogh's ghastly idea of a café at Arles. She sat alone, fingering the glass that stood close to the edge of the circular marble-topped table. A simple black dress, the eternal black of the Frenchwoman, clung perilously to her shoulders, and in her hair was a single red flower.

When the door opened and Josette came in, Clarice did not even glance in her direction, but she was aware that Josette was coming to her table.

"You permit, Clarice?"

Clarice looked up and nodded, and Josette sat down. The waiter approached. "As usual?" he asked.

"But yes, thanks," said Josette, and the waiter withdrew to the bar. "Is there another one tonight?" she asked her companion. Her voice was low, too low to carry even as far as the next table.

Clarice nodded, her eyes calm. "The Café Voltaire," she said. "The bomb is set for five o'clock precisely." Her voice was low, too, but it carried its distance.

Josette whistled softly through nice teeth and lips. "They've picked a big one this time."

Clarice shrugged her shoulders and the black dress slipped a little. She adjusted it with long, tapering fingers on which the nails lay like blood-red rose petals. "It's a strong bomb. There won't be a Boche left alive in the place. It will get rid of the Alsatian German proprietor, too, and the *agents provocateurs* whom he calls waiters."

The other picked up her drink from the waiter's tray as he paused before the table. "How is the malady of the throat?" she asked him.

He groaned. "Like this and like that, Mademoiselle Josette," he said. She clucked her tongue in sympathy. "It will go better," she told him, and he departed, leaving a little plate marked *Frs. 3.50* lying on the table before her. She lifted her glass and took a long sip.

"I'd better get along to tell the girls not to go near the place," she said. "They shot ten hostages in Caen yesterday." It was as though she had said it rained yesterday.

Clarice nodded. "I know."

Josette stared at her. "I forgot. You come from Caen, don't you?"

"That was a long time ago," said Clarice, staring down at her glass. She picked it up after a moment and touched it to her lips. "My father was one of them," she said. "One of the ten."

Josette looked at her in quick sympathy, reached across and laid a hand for a moment on hers. "What can I say?" Josette murmured. "Some day they'll pay for it, one believes." Her eyes now were hard, unfocused. Clarice did not answer her by so much as the movement of an eyelash. She rose. "The Café Voltaire. I'll tell the girls."

As she passed the waiter she took five francs from her purse and handed him the torn paper bill. Clarice's eyes did not follow her as she slipped out of the door into the rain of Paris.

WHEN the door opened again Clarice was still sitting motionless. The man who came in was young for a colonel, tall, broad of shoulder and blond of hair. His clear blue eyes, with laughter in their deeps, smiled at Clarice as he bowed before her.

Her eyes began at his Prussian boots and traveled his length until they reached his face. "Carl!" The exclamation was wrenched from her throat as though by force.

"That's right." He laughed with real pleasure that she had remembered him instantly. "May I?" He sat down while she stared at him, fascinated. "They told me you were here."

"Yes, it's my particular foot on the earth," she said. "But—Carl! How long—"

"It's eight years since we said good-by at Le Bourget," he said. "Clarice, you're prettier than ever. Prettier even than I remember you." He looked around him at the shabby patrons of the shabby café. "But that was when you were drawing still life at Julien's. You had plenty of talent, too. So if I'm surprised at—" He looked around at them again.

She smiled slowly. "Would you like to know about my first false step, and how I came to this life?"

He looked at her with warmth. "Forget it. I didn't mean to ask such silly questions."

"Who told you I was here?"

"We have our sources of information." He smiled at her.

"You mean that pleasant little social organization, the Gestapo?" she demanded.

He nodded. "Call it that, if you wish. Very necessary in wartime."

"I didn't know you were in the army," she said. "You never told me."

"I was in the reserve," he said seriously. "We did not talk of such things, you and I."

"You've become a colonel, I see."

He shrugged his shoulders. "Shortage of officers." He leaned forward confidentially. "Uncle Joe's boys on the eastern front have been disposing of them."

Her eyes shone. "The master race can take it, though."

He looked at her seriously. "I think that should be rather obvious by now. Look, Clarice—let's try not to go into that. I'm sorry we have to meet in this way, but when your country's at war you cannot allow yourself the luxury of personal feelings. Clarice, I've never forgotten our years together. I know you can't look at me in this uniform and forget what's happened to France. But things are going to be better when this is all over—you'll see. And when they told me to run up to Paris and take over the investigation of the terrorist bombings, all I could think of was that I might see you." He looked at her eagerly, the little crow's-feet around his eyes crinkling up in the way she had remembered for eight years.

He leaned forward. "Don't hold it against us—all this." He motioned vaguely at Paris in general.

"You're investigating the bombings?" she asked.

He motioned to the waiter, who had stood off respectfully. "Two *fines à l'eau,*" he said. The waiter nodded and withdrew. "You see, I remember what you like to drink." She was silent. "I remember other things, too. Our last night at Enghien, for example, after the steeplechase races. I remember the moonlight on the little artificial lake and the funny pattern it made on the terrace of the Casino where we were having a late bite. Our youth, Clarice . . . these things never come again."

"They never come again," said Clarice quietly.

He leaned forward. "Don't hold it against us—all this." He motioned vaguely at Paris in general. "These are not personal things. When they sent me up here to investigate the café bombings—I just got in this morning—the first thing I thought of was that I could look you up. I did. That's how I knew where you were to be found. Oh, they know that you people are aware when a place is to be destroyed. It's an obvious thing; none of you girls are ever in it, by some odd chance."

She looked at him with a swift obliqueness out of her strangely calm eyes.

He took something out of his wallet. "You wouldn't remember what this is, but I've kept it ever since that night at Enghien."

It was a small crumpled ribbon, yellow.

She regarded it slowly. "Yes, I remember it. It came on a package of candy you bought me and I put it in my hair. Then you took it . . ."

She sighed. He leaned forward and covered her hand with his. "Clarice," he said, "let's go to a café where there's music and try to forget for a little while." His tone was imploring, not like a colonel's at all, more like that of a blue-eyed blond boy lonely in Paris.

"Aren't you afraid?" she said in a tone that was almost bantering.

He smiled. "Ordinarily, I'd be a very good prize for them to get. But I'll be going with you. I think that'll make it safe enough. Remember? We used to go every day at five to the Café Voltaire. It was very gay there."

She sat silent, motionless. For a moment her eyes closed.

O Lord God, remember me, I pray Thee, and strengthen me, I pray Thee, only this once. . . .

It came to her from a forgotten Bible lesson and almost came in an audible prayer from her lips.

"I've been thinking of it since I got on the plane last night," said the colonel with the blue eyes. "I was stationed up at Caen, in charge of the show there. We had a little trouble, but it's straightened out now. Messy business. All I could think of was that last evening at Enghien, and our afternoons at the Café Voltaire."

She smiled at him. "Oh, Carl, it *is* good to see you. Do let's go to the Café Voltaire. It's still gay there at five o'clock, and we can just about make it."

He stood up, smiling down at her. "Now it's beginning to feel like Paris."

THE END

SICILIAN TASK FORCE

Grimly Admiral Kirk watches the first landing boats head for the beaches of Scoglitti.

A tense account of one of the greatest amphibious assaults of the war—by an officer who saw our strategy unfold from the deck of a U. S. warship

BY LIEUTENANT (j. g.) EARL BURTON, U. S. N. R.

WE are sailing for the invasion beaches of Sicily. To the west of us warships and transports are coming from other points. Eastward other convoys are gathered and waiting. We are moving on the greatest amphibious assault in this war.

Yesterday we had turkey and ice cream for dinner. Late in the afternoon a group of men entered the admiral's cabin and took chairs facing a long table covered with maps. They were the war correspondents assigned to a task force under the command of Rear Admiral Alan Goodrich Kirk. There were Clark Lee of INS, late from the Pacific battle area; John Moroso and John Mecklin, of AP and UP, both of whom had covered the African invasion. And there were magazine men there: Reginald Ingraham of Time, Fred Painton of Reader's Digest, and George Perry of the Saturday Evening Post.

All our ships had been sealed for the past week. Men went ashore only on written orders. Through doors opened and quickly closed you could see tables littered with maps, overlays, and charts. Men came to mess late and left quickly. Guard mail, with reports and secret orders, went out at all hours day and night by armed messenger. Only a few knew our destination or mission.

In his cabin Admiral Kirk greeted the correspondents. Few press conferences have seen attention at a higher pitch. Since the receipt of secret orders from the Navy Department, throughout the Atlantic crossing and the time spent in this North African port, the one question uppermost in every mind was, Where do we strike? We were now to get the answer.

"Gentlemen," said Admiral Kirk, "we are sailing to Sicily."

Chairs hitched closer around the table as he continued.

"We are going to land a division of Army troops on the southern coast of the island, on beaches near a small town called Scoglitti."

A large map was spread out on the table for the men to follow.

"We and our division are only a part of the forces involved in this attack, but we are at the hinge. To the west of us will be other American forces, and to the east will be the British. Overhead we shall have a very large force of Allied aircraft. Ahead of us and to the west there will be parachute troops. Covering the operation at sea will be our escort vessels and a strong British battle force."

A detailed map was opened.

"The transports of our force, under Commodore Phillips and Commodore Loomis, will land their troops here," said the admiral, pointing to beaches west of Scoglitti. "Commodore Bailey's ships will use beaches east of the town. The landing will be supported by the fire of destroyers, cruisers, and other craft; it will be screened by more destroyers. At daybreak we shall be joined by our LSTs, LCTs, and LCI(L)s. We shall proceed to unload the Army's equipment as quickly and as cleanly as we can."

As Admiral Kirk continued, the battle plan unfolded. The responsibility was to be divided into two parts, the western task force and the eastern task force. The line of demarcation would run southwest approximately 225 degrees from Point Religione on the Island of Sicily.

In supreme command of the operation was General Dwight D. Eisenhower. The western task force, composed of American forces, Army and Navy, would have Lieutenant General George Patton, Jr., commanding the former and Vice-Admiral Hewitt commanding the latter. Under General Patton would be Lieutenant General Omar Bradley, victor of the Tunisian campaign, and Major General Troy H. Middleton. The Navy's group consisted of task forces commanded by Admiral Hall, Admiral Kirk, and Admiral Connolly.

Naval commander for the British forces would be Admiral Sir A. B. Cunningham.

British ground forces, under the command of General Alexander, were to land to the east of our positions. Air Marshal Tedder would direct the Allied air support from North African fields and from Malta. We would have in force some 3,000 planes against approximately 1,000 Axis aircraft. This was a variable figure, however, due to the location of our objective. It was expected that our Air Forces would occupy the enemy airfields within a reasonable time, enabling us to operate from the island itself.

The conference closed and the correspondents returned to their ships. All the dreary hours of waiting would soon be over.

ALREADY troops in battle dress have gathered on the weather decks, rifles sticking up like needles in a huge moss-brown pincushion. The winches begin their cable-against-steel whine and the landing craft are lowered. They idle in wide lazy circles. Nets are lowered from the port and starboard sides of the transport. The pincushion disintegrates into groups of four going over the side and into the landing craft. Loaded boats pull away and go through their exercise. Finished, they return and the men crawl up the nets and fade somewhere inside the transport.

In a cabin below, the Army boat teams unbutton and struggle out of their green coveralls.

"How was the canoe trip?"

It's always a "canoe trip."

Five o'clock, and the transport has settled into a pre-dinner quiet. The sun is low. Bunks are full of silent men. Only the ship's noises are heard.

This is our last day at anchor. This has not been announced but rather felt by the troops. The air is heavy with heat and waiting. The day's schedule of work is finished. On deck, guns are cleaned, polished, and lovingly handled. On the old sun deck, now the "gun" deck, a sailor is sweating over the lift of a weight bar, another is splicing a line. A pharmacist's mate, off duty, is sprawled in a life raft thumbing an old copy of Liberty. Two boys in dungarees are sharing a much handled comic strip.

Our leaving is confirmed. Passing time draws closer and tighter all the parts of this gigantic plan. Months of day-and-night work, planning, confusion, estimates, mistakes, are all fitting into shape and pattern. You forget the momentary disruptions and confusion, which at the time of their muddle were so disheartening but now appear small and the inevitable result of man working with man.

Along the rail of a near-by transport are uneven lines of American faces topping the green of Army coveralls with the sun-browned skin of soldiers, the odd shapes of heads shaved, the various lengths of hair stubble growing out again. All watching. On other ships as far as you can see are men indistinguishable from these, filling in the open spaces of the ships like a swarm of bees on a dead tree limb.

We leave just before sunset.

On deck, after breakfast, the day is gray with low watery clouds. Every transport has a barrage balloon streaming high above its superstructure. The balloons and the slow roll of the gray ships give the convoy a curious animation.

"Looks like a herd of elephants on a great parade," a sailor comments.

The Mediterranean coast line slips by. White hillside buildings materialize from the mist, and the great convoy of another task force leaves the harbor there to join us.

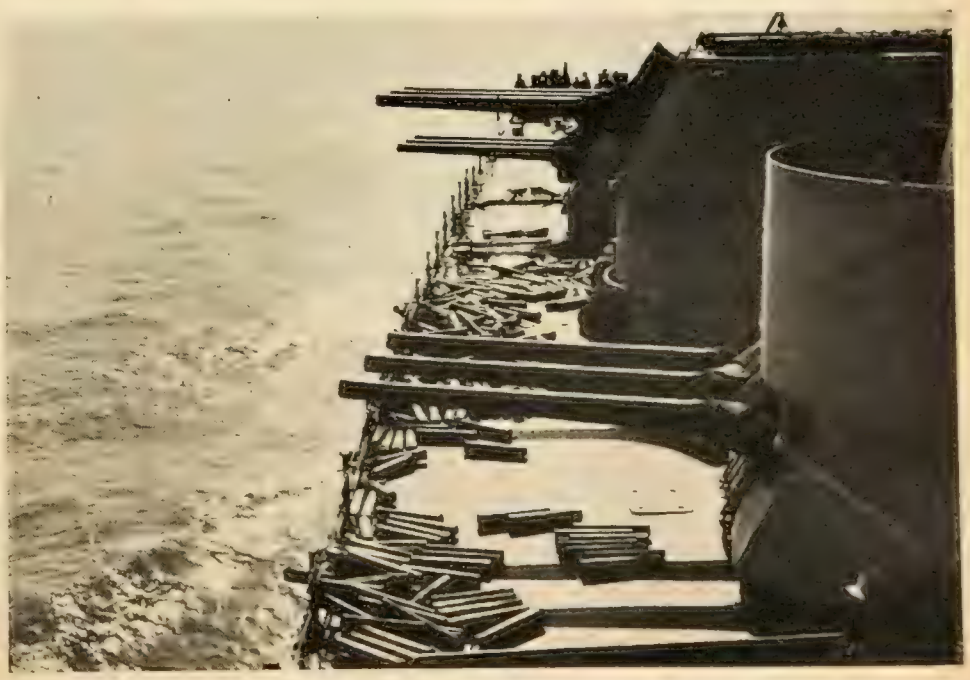
News names pass by our starboard side—Philippeville, Bône, and the mountains of Tunisia, which three short months ago echoed with the guns of retreating Germans. Off in the distance is another convoy, the one that has sailed from England to meet us here.

Another dawn, and we near a harbor that now lies bloated with an incredible number of ships, destroyers, patrol craft, and lane after lane of the low-riding tank lighters, the amphibious LCI(L)s and LSTs. These ark-shaped craft bristling with tanks, guns, and supplies for the ground forces have crossed the Atlantic and the length of the Mediterranean to gather here. We pass, and the harbor empties as if by force of suction as the little ships join our formation.

Ahead lies a narrow channel

(*Continued on page 56*)

Seen from almost directly overhead, Allied barges swarm upon the shores of Sicily.



Empty shell casings hint at the fury of the bombardment hurled at enemy positions.

Broken River

The day of reckoning finds Rack with no money but plenty of ingenuity as Sara Bishop steps in for what she thinks will be the crippling blow

BY JOHN and WARD HAWKINS

ILLUSTRATED BY JAY NOURBEL

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

"YOU killed my brother," Sam Horton told Rack Tinker. "I can't prove it. Not yet! But I will!"

Rack hadn't realized before this that Sam was aware of what had happened ten years ago. Now he knew that Horton, hating him, and determined to take the Bishop contract from the Broken River Lumber Company, of which Rack was woods boss, wouldn't rest until he had brought about Rack's arrest for murder.

The Broken River company, owned by Rack's foster father, Big Red Tinker, had seen lean days. The contract to cut the spruce on the Bishop tract came as a life-saver. Clyde Prio, a lawyer and a friend of the Tinkers, had persuaded Bishop's widow to give it to Broken River. But Sara, Mrs. Bishop's pretty, stubborn, red-haired daughter, had no confidence in Rack nor in the company's ability to handle the job. The contract was signed and Sara was helpless—at the moment. But she reminded Rack:

"There's a stumpage payment of ten thousand dollars due in six weeks. If it isn't made on time, the contract breaks itself."

Rack was determined to see the job through. The men at the logging camp were back of him. So were Prio and Prio's secretary, Gale Nordlund. Machinery was bought on credit and the work began.

It was a race against time—not only to get money to meet the payment, but to finish before Sam Horton got his "proof," and before Will Jaspers talked. For Jaspers, whose wife, Lily, had known Rack back when both were in their teens, also knew the secret of Rack's past. He had tried blackmail, but Rack refused to pay; all he would do was give Jaspers a job at Broken River. Now Jaspers was growing impatient—and the day for the payment was drawing near.

BREAKFAST was over, and the men were bunching up by the speeder shed when Rack cornered Stump and Big Red. "This's the twenty-fifth," Rack said. "We've got to have the sky line rigged and running by the first."

"Damn right," Big Red said heartily.

Rack watched Stump McLary. The little man was thinking, his brown face wrinkled. Rigging a sky line was a big job. "We'll sure try," he promised.

At nine o'clock Will Jaspers came to Rack's cabin. Rack was shaving. Jaspers leaned against the wall by the door. He still had a cold—red nose, red watery eyes—but his old derision was back. His thin mouth had the old half-grin he'd worn when he'd first come to camp.

Rack said, "Why aren't you working?"

"I am," said Jaspers easily. "I come to camp for a gasket." He took his time about lighting a cigarette. "Heard you were goin' to town and I figured I'd have a last talk with you."

Rack lathered his chin, watching Jaspers in the mirror. "All right," he said. "Start talking."

Jaspers pushed his hat back. "I've took a liking to the camp—you, too, as far as that goes. I'd hate to see you lose your shirt."

Rack stropped his straight-edge razor.

"Nice of you," he said. "Go on."

"So I'm givin' you a last chance. Clip me in on this spruce, or lose it. I ain't gonna argue. Just say yes or no." He grinned confidently. "What'll it be?"

Rack turned, the razor gleaming in his hand. He looked at Jaspers a long time. Then quietly he said, "I wonder how you'd look without a nose."

Jaspers said, "Lay off, now!"

Rack lifted the razor. Jaspers swore and jerked open the door. There was fury in his twisted face.

"O. K., kid—you asked for it!"

The door banged shut and he was gone.

Rack looked down to see the sliding shine of light on razor steel, the faint trembling of his hand. "Careful," he told himself wryly. "You'll cut your own throat. . . ."

Rack was in Westburyport by noon. He went down the street to an old building that fronted on the harbor. Clyde Prio's office was on the second floor; the stairway was narrow and dark. Rack had reached the landing, midway, when a bulky figure appeared at the stairhead.

"Well," a voice said. "Rack Tinker."

Rack said, "Hello, Horton."

Sam Horton's smile was wide and white. He stood with his hands on his hips, looking down. He wore gray, well cut, expensive. He made no move to step aside, and there was that about him—in his eyes, in his hard-turned grin—that made Rack think of Will Jaspers. They had much in common, Horton and Jaspers: the same black and bitter drive, the same capacity for unending hate.

"You're in my way," Rack said quietly.

Horton chuckled. "I want to talk to you."

"Go ahead," said Rack. "I'll listen."

"I'm going to drop all legal action, Tinker. I could put Big Red in jail for that wild pitch of his, and I could get a court order and make you stop work until the validity of that sale has been threshed out." He lifted one hand. "But I'm not going to do either of those things. I'm going to give you a break."

Rack said, "Turning Christian, eh?" He came up the last two steps to reach the hall and pushed past Horton.

Horton said, "Just a minute, Tinker!"

"No," said Rack. "I've heard enough. You're not in the saddle. Clyde Prio found some way to fix

that. You can't do anything at all."

Horton's eyes were amused. "So that's what you think?" He chuckled. "Brace yourself, Tinker," he said. "You've got a surprise coming."

Rack Tinker turned his back on Horton and walked down the hall. He opened the door of Prio's office and went into that old and cluttered room. Sara Bishop and Gale Nordlund were there. Clyde Prio sat in a tipped-back desk chair, his feet on one corner of his desk. He squinted thoughtfully at Rack.

"You're just too late," he said.

"An hour late and a dollar short," Rack said cheerfully. "That's me."

And now he was aware of the stiffness within the room. No one moved or spoke. Sara Bishop looked at him and then looked quickly away. Gale Nordlund's hands were moveless upon the keyboard of her typewriter.

Prio said, "Horton threw in the sponge."

"I know. I met him on the stairs."

"I—I have to go now," Sara Bishop said.

Prio looked at her, eyes sharp beneath furrowed brows. "Are you sure you won't change your mind?"

"We've been over that," she said.

She left her chair by the window and started for the door. As she passed Rack, he put his hand upon her arm. "Pup," he said, and there was gentleness in his voice, "you look frazzled. Some one has been kicking you around. What's happened?"

She did not raise her head. "Nothing."

"You're sure of that?" he said.

"Yes. Please let me go."

Rack said, "You know what you want."

Sara Bishop's heels struck sharp sound from the floor. She went through the door and closed it softly. There was disgust in the look Gale had for Rack.

"Whose side are you on?" she asked acidly. "We really ought to know."

Her eyes were hating him as no man had ever been hated before. She bared her teeth.

"The underdog's," Prio said. "Always."

Rack said, "What's all this about?"

"Horton quit. You can force a man to do anything, if you find the proper club. And I found it." Clyde Prio leaned far back in his chair, locking his hands behind his head. "That brings us to the money."

"I've had no luck," said Rack. "I tried the bank and I tried Harshberger. They turned me down flat."

Gale said, "Why not talk to Beulah Bishop?"

"I thought of that," Clyde Prio said. "She told me the business is now entirely in Sara's hands."

GALE NORDLUND looked up suddenly. She said something—a faint and whispered something that was lost in the scrape of her chair. Prio slanted his head at her. "The counsel for the defense will please shut up," he said.

"It's your show," Gale murmured.

And Prio said, "What are you up to, Rack?"

"I'm hunting money," Rack said. "Remember?"

"You are and you aren't. There's one man in this town who might help. He has the money and he likes you. And you've stayed clear away from him. Why, Rack?"

"You're talking about Horton?"

"Yes," said Prio. "Old Jim Horton."

"He's out of the mill. He's a sick man."

"Bosh!" There was a tightening at the corners of Prio's mouth. "He's not too sick to write a check. And you damn well know it!"

Woodenly Rack said, "Do I?"

Prio got to his feet. "You could give a billy goat lessons in stubbornness," he said. "I knew you wouldn't see Old Jim. I didn't know why, but I knew there was a reason. So I saw him."

"Yes?" said Rack.

"I explained the situation. He was interested. He wanted to know why we didn't get the money from Sam?"

Rack did not move or speak.

"So now we come to it," Prio said. "Sam Horton hates your guts, my friend. There has to be a reason. Old Jim asked about that. He wanted to know why you two are at each other's throats." Prio lifted one hand and let it fall. "I gave him a reason. I said you both wanted Sara Bishop, that you were fighting over her."

Rack's face remained wooden. "And then?"

"Old Jim put his checkbook away," Prio said. "He's for Sam and he's for you, and he'll be damned if he'll help either. 'Let 'em fight,' he said. 'Nothing like a wench to bring out the best in a man. I'm going to cheer for both of 'em!'" Prio thrust his chin at Rack. "That let me out. I was finished. But there's still a chance that you can talk him around."

Rack shook his head. "Sorry, Clyde."

"You can't hide your head in the sand forever." Prio was scowling now. "Things have a way of catching up with a man. You—" He broke off. "To hell with this," he said disgustedly. "I'm going to lunch."

Gale said, "I'll hold down the office."

"Do," Prio said. "And beat some sense into Rack."

"I'd need an ax for that."

She stayed at her desk after Prio had gone, making a long task of straightening the papers there. Rack was behind her, and though she did not look at him she knew his brows were cocked in that slanting line, that he would be smiling faintly as he always did when he walled himself away from her.

That damned pride of his! she thought.

And that was the key to the man, if there was a key. Take two parts pride, one part stubbornness, and stiffen with cool reserve. Garnish with a deep tan and a crooked grin, and you had Rack. Or maybe you had him. Maybe the redhead had squeezed you out. No, Gale told herself—not after all these years . . .

She turned her eyes to the window. The pale sun of winter touched the glass. Like that, she thought. The heat and the warmth are gone. Perhaps time had done this to them. In her mind, then, she saw her own round script on a page of her diary. One sentence, heavily underscored: "Rack and I have an understanding. A sort of unspoken agreement."

A lot of comfort that was! The weeks got away and the years got away, and all you had was a one-of-these-days-when-we-get-around-to-it feeling that had never been put in words. She sighed. There was nothing for her to do. She'd just have to wait—and hope.

"You'll curdle," Rack said. "I can see your face in the window. The look on it would sour all the milk in a dairy."

"Rack," she said, "Clyde's right about Sara Bishop. She's the reason, or part of the reason, Sam Horton hates you so. If you had to make a choice between her and the spruce, I'm afraid Broken River and Clyde and—the rest of us would take quite a beating."

Rack said, "Got it all figured, haven't you?"

Steadily she said, "Yes, Rack."

He came to stand beside her desk. "You're wonderful," he said, and laughed. "You've dreamed up something that doesn't exist. There's nothing between Sara and me."

"Do you mean that?"

He grinned. "Cross my heart."

"Rack," she looked up at him, her eyes sober and searching, "I'd like to believe you. Honestly. And I think I do. But something tells me . . . Rack, I wish you'd put that in writing—put it in one of Clyde's airtight contracts—and then sign it. I—I wish it would mean something if you did!"

He said, "Stop worrying, Gale. I won't sell the spruce, or Clyde, or Broken River short."

"What about Nordlund?" she said.

"Tops," he said. "Number one."

"You'll tell me if you change your mind?"

"Yes. And that's a promise." He bent and kissed her exactly on the tip of the nose. "Now I've got to run. There's work a-waitin'. I'll see you around."

THE sky line was finished on the second. Rack watched the first logs roar out across the canyon and turned to smile at Stump. "You did a job," he said.

"Aw!" Stump grinned like a flustered girl.

"Now we've got a chance," Rack said. "We've got logs going to the mill."

"We'll need a scaler."

"Tony Borg'll do that for us. He'll scale and grade the logs as we dump them in the mill pond."

"What about the dough?" Stump said.

"Clyde's working on that."

There was snow on the far hills that week. The next week brought fog and driving rain. It brought two calls from Clyde Prio. "Keep the log trains rolling," he said. "Keep your fingers crossed. I'm on the trail of a loan. I'll call you when I know."

The eighteenth was windless and clear. Rack stayed in camp throughout the morning, stayed near the telephone. At noon he said, "Addie, maybe there's something in the old one about the watched pot never boiling. I'm going up where the work is."

"I'll send somebody with the news."

He left Addie's cabin and went down the road to the speeder shed. Lily Jaspers was waiting there, a breathless Lily. She whispered, "Rack," and her fingers were like steel digging at the flesh of his arm. "Rack! He's gone. He got clean away!"

He said, "When did this happen?"

"An hour ago. Maybe two. I—"

Quietly he said, "Tell me about it."

"There ain't much to tell," she said,

(*Continued on page 51*)

They were ready on that fateful December 7, nearly two years ago, when Jap treachery struck at Pearl Harbor. In peace and in war they stand by to save our bluejackets from disease and death. Here, in

DOCTORS AWEIGH

By Rear Admiral Charles M. Oman (M. C.), U. S. N.

is the story of the Navy's doctors and nurses in action—a gripping account of those gallant men and women who fight as thrilling battles as the men in the line.

Coming Next Week

In a Liberty abridgment to a reading time of one evening

THEY ALL ASK DOGAN

BY FRANCIS CHASE, Jr.

The War Department's one-man "Information, Please" always obliges, is seldom stumped

ONE of the best sources of information about the Army is Charles Dogan, a forty-three-year-old son of a Negro slave who entered the War Department as a messenger in 1918 and today earns less than $2,000 a year in his job with the publication section of the U. S. Corps of Engineers.

No matter in what quarter of the globe old-line Army officers serve, they have learned to depend upon Dogan's phenomenal memory. It is axiomatic among officers in Washington that the quickest way to get the answer to a question on Army procedure, past orders, or historical data is to "ask Dogan."

His mail is heavy. Recently a brigadier general wrote Dogan from Australia: "I understand that sometime in the past an expedition of either the U. S. Army or Navy went to the River Jordan and the Dead Sea. I should like very much to know more about this expedition."

Dogan sent him a complete account of the expedition from Senate Executive Document 34, the 30th Congress, Second Session, dated February 26, 1849.

A colonel now stationed on the West Coast wrote: "My family is now living in a leased home in Washington, but I should like to move them to California. Is there anything I can do about the lease?"

The next westbound plane bore Dogan's reply—a copy of an Army bulletin setting forth a District of Columbia Supreme Court decision invalidating leases of Army officers ordered away on Army duty.

No matter how vague the query, no matter in what dusty and forgotten file the answer may repose, in eight cases out of ten, by actual count, Dogan finds that answer and passes it along without delay.

An old gentleman living in Vicksburg recently wrote to the Adjutant General's office asking the names of six Army officers he had met on a train between Richmond, Virginia, and Vicksburg, Mississippi, on a September day in 1898. The only clue he could give to their identity was that they were en route to participate in some sort of centennial at the Vicksburg battlefield and cemetery. Dogan located the Army orders assigning six officers to attend that ceremony, documented those orders with their travel orders (which placed them upon the very train the gentleman mentioned), and forwarded their names to the questioner.

Recently—and for pressing reasons—a lieutenant colonel of the Corps of Engineers, on duty in Australia, wanted technical information about the ponton bridge General Hooker had thrown across the Rappahannock in the Civil War. Dogan located a diagrammatic sketch of the bridge and sent the photostatic copy on to the officer.

There are two factors in Dogan's success as a one-man information service for the Army. The first—a terrific memory—he takes no credit for. "The Dogans were always good rememberers," he insists.

The second factor is his habit of reading everything that passes through his hands and remembering what disposition has been made of it in War Department files.

Born in Spartanburg, South Carolina, Dogan went to school for five years at the old Academy on South Liberty Street, which had been taken over by a church for the education of Negro children. His postgraduate work included several years as end man in a traveling minstrel show and more as a Pullman porter. In 1913, he went to Alaska as personal servant to Colonel W. P. Richardson and Major J. Steese. Returning the following year, the officers got him a berth with the Panama Railroad Steamship Line. In 1918 he went to the War Department as a messenger to General Abbott of the Corps of Engineers.

Here, Dogan explains, his real education began. "I got my education," he'll tell you, "by reading War Department publications and by being associated with brilliant people."

There is no question but that he has been close to some of the most brilliant people in the War Department, among them General Somervell, chief of the Services of Supply; Major General John C. H. Lee, chief of the S. O. S. of the American Expeditionary Forces in England and Africa; Colonel John P. Dinsmore, legal adviser to the Secretary of War; Major General Francis B. Wilby, commandant of the Military Academy at West Point; Brigadier General Johns, technical adviser to the Australian government, and a host of other top-flight officers.

His associations with such men have not been office associations alone. He has driven their cars, served their large private dinners, taken care of their furnaces and their children, polished their boots.

Mrs. Dogan's one complaint is that her husband brings his job home with him. "All he talks about from the time he gets up to the time he goes to sleep," she complains, "is the Army. It's General this and Colonel something-or-other all the time."

THE END

CAN WE EASE UP AFTER HITLER'S DEFEAT?

Continued from Page 11

maintain a huge Army. Competent observers point out that a gigantic occupation job in Europe will be necessary, and that the more men we have available to concentrate against Japan the quicker the whole mess can be cleaned up. Yet even if the Army and Navy are not reduced—and nobody suggests they will be—the rate of induction conceivably could be slowed down. Congress probably would take a hand in this.

No one should try to translate an early fall of Germany into new tires for his old prewar auto—not even if the government decides to mete out a little more gasoline. Rubber experts in Washington point out that the rich sources of natural rubber still will remain in Japanese hands, and that the synthetic rubber program, while greatly advanced, will not mean a prewar supply of tires for civilian use. Yet the end of the European war and its enormous drain of matériel, coupled with the enormous increases in the metal-producing facilities of the United States, cannot help but mean some additional goods for consumers here.

Curiously, as yet there seems to be no over-all blueprint for what is to be done when the European war ends. Throughout the government and throughout industry, agencies, groups, and individuals are talking about postwar planning—Wilfred Sykes, Chicago steelmaker and chairman of the National Association of Manufacturers' Postwar Committee, estimates that there are two hundred groups active in this field—but no one can say just what will be done or what positive first steps will be taken.

Perhaps it is impossible, now, to make such A-B-C plans with any degree of precision, but there are some circles in Washington that believe it would not be a bad idea to appoint a Postwar Planning Czar to work out a master plan.

ONE encouraging feature of the postwar outlook is that industry has managed in many instances to save the tools that will be needed for reconversion, and is doing some serious thinking against the day when it may get even a partial green light from the powers directing the war.

The late Edsel Ford once told the writer: "The saddest thing in the world to me is the sight of a good machine standing idle." In the great industrial centers of the nation today are thousands of single-purpose machines, stored away, which never found their way to the scrap heap. They are the nucleus of the peacetime "weapons" with which industry hopes to be able to get back into production for the consumers.

How much these now idle machines mean to industry is illustrated in a story told by C. E. Wilson, president of General Motors. Last winter he and Major General Levin H. Campbell, Jr., chief of Army Ordnance, were inspecting one of the G. M. plants at Flint, Michigan, where big guns now are manufactured. As they went out into the yard, there were vast lines of monster machines—presses, drills, etc.—standing there in the snow. Mr. Wilson turned to General Campbell and said: "One thing I'd like you to think about a little ahead of time, if you can. When we've won this war and want to get back on the job, is the government going to let us put *their* machines out in the snow promptly?"

Industry in general has a confidence, which is shared by a good many men in the government, that it can snap back to civilian orders when it gets the "go" signal. N.A.M.'s Sykes talks about a six-month period for complete reconversion of plants to full peacetime production, and Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., chairman of the board of General Motors, mammoth

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Although the use of frozen rivets that expand after insertion for greater holding power is not new to industry, the method of delivery at the San Diego plant of Consolidated Aircraft is distinctively novel and efficient. Tricycle carts, similar to those used by ice-cream vendors, are used. These deliver the frozen rivets from the main refrigerator to the assembly line.

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producers in wartime and peacetime alike, has mentioned "four or five months" as the time it would take to get back into production of 1942-model cars. However, it is believed in Washington that, if industry were given advance notice as to when it would be permitted to start turning out a stipulated amount of goods to fill the gaps in civilian commodities, a smooth transition might be arranged. That planning job might well be done by a Postwar Planning Czar.

If Germany should be knocked out, who would say what balances should be struck between the military and the civilian economy?

At the top, of course, would be President Roosevelt, who recently brought the postwar subject into the limelight through his outline of benefits he thought should be guaranteed to returning soldiers. He would be aided by his home-front economic generalissimo, James F. Byrnes, and by a small coterie of top-flight White House economic advisers.

Donald M. Nelson, chairman of the War Production Board, would have a powerful say-so. Mr. Nelson is one of the Washington officials who shy violently away from any public discussion of what Germany's defeat will mean to our civilians. He says the only business at hand is the business of winning the war. However, it is authoritatively established that he is giving some serious thought to the problem, so as not to be caught flat-footed if Germany suddenly goes under. He is expected to have at least the outline of a plan ready.

Two other important figures will be Under-Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson and Under-Secretary of Navy James Forrestal, shrewd directors of Army and Navy production programs. In Army decisions, Lieutenant General Brehon Somervell, commanding general of Army Service Forces, will swing much weight, his actions, of course, reflecting the wishes of the Army command. Likewise, Navy decisions will be influenced by Admiral Ernest J. King, Commander in Chief of the Fleet, and his high aides.

Secretary Ickes, the Petroleum Administrator, will have a good deal to say about the trickle of gasoline and fuel oil to civilians, although his decisions will be governed largely by what military and naval men say.

IN the field of food rationing the powers that be at OPA, the Department of Agriculture, the War Food Administration, Lend-Lease, the State Department, and ex-Governor Herbert Lehman's Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations will work out the decisions. Here again, however, the real deciding vote will be cast by the military and naval machine, which will have a great deal to say about how much food must be given immediately to liberated Europe.

Congress has tasted blood lately, and is determined not to be shoved into the background. If Congress gets the idea that man power should be shifted or that civilians should get certain benefits, its idea is very likely to be more or less heeded. Congress has its own committees looking into the postwar picture.

When the writer asked a certain government official if the end of the European war would mean more for the public of the commodity which his agency controls, he replied: "Go ask General Marshall and Admiral King just how they are going to fight the war against Japan, and then I can give you the answer."

That is the crux of the whole situation. Plans for the campaign against Japan are, of course, not known.

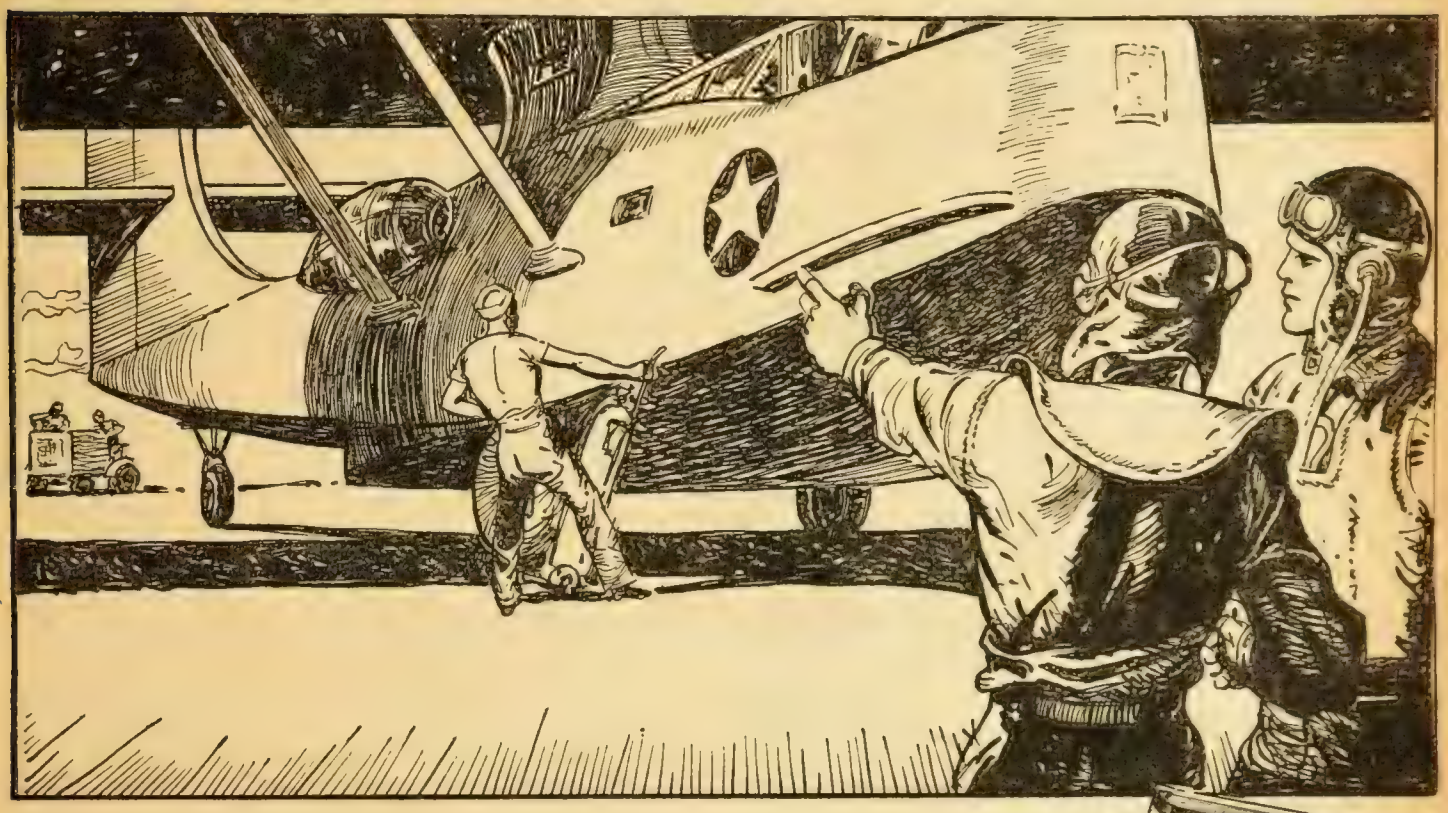
Efforts to pin down the Army-Navy attitude on what the fall of Germany will mean in the way of increased civilian goods result in some curious contradictions—enough to convince the observer of two things: (1) There is no Army-Navy blueprint yet to cover the contingency, although (2) there is a lot of "informal thinking" on the subject.

Some Army men impatiently think we should "win the war first," and some Navy Department sources indicate irritation at "being pressed too close" by "civilian pressure groups." In these connections, it was interesting to note the recent resignation from the Army of Brigadier General Robert Wood Johnson, business man and chairman of the

(*Continued on page 68*)

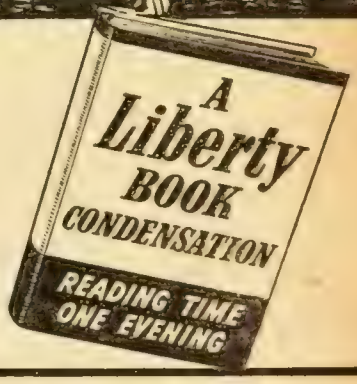
LOVE at FIRST FLIGHT

BY CHARLES SPALDING and OTIS CARNEY



At first the flying got Lester Dowd down—but the life of this Private Hargrove of the Naval Air Cadets didn't stand still long enough for him to worry much.

The critics are calling this the funniest book of the year—and who's to say they're not right?



ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN RICHARD FLANAGAN

AT NINE o'clock on Monday morning, December 8, 1941, I was in the mood to take up the sword.

"Come back with a birth certificate, a transcript of your high-school and college record, and three letters of reference. Then we'll talk to you."

That was all the officer in charge of enlistment on Chicago's Navy Pier had to say. He was a large squat man with a ruddy face. Now that the war of nerves was finished, he was much relieved. In fact, he was feeling first rate.

"Where did you go to college?" he asked genially.

"Yale University, sir."

"Where is that?" he asked blankly, resorting to a time-worn device that fetched a gale of laughter from the crowd of applicants.

"New Haven, sir," I said, reddening to the ears. Then I left.

Approximately two weeks later I returned armed with a birth certificate, transcripts of my academic efforts, and three high-powered letters of reference that would have sold slavery to the North.

With this to back me, I expected a measure of success. I was applying for the V-7 program which turned college graduates into officers and gentlemen in ninety days. A yeoman sat at the desk where I had previously found the enlisting officer. The place was empty.

"It's Tuesday," said the yeoman.

"It certainly is." That much I knew.

"Nobody here"—he gestured at the empty room. "Never anybody here on Tuesday. Go to the seventh floor of the old Post Office Building." It sounded like the ghostly advice you get in graveyards at midnight, but I was in a hurry to join the legions. I hurried off.

When I got to the Navy's room on the seventh floor of the old Post Office Building, it was occupied solely by another yeoman.

"It's Tuesday. Tuesday they move down on 28 Canal Street," he said.

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Tuesday seemed to stir the *Wanderlust* in city-bound seafaring men to the point of madness.

I found nobody but another yeoman down on 28 Canal Street. The Navy apparently stationed them about like buoys.

"Nobody here. They ain't arrived yet," he said. "This bein' Tuesday, I never expected them."

Outside I explained the problem to the cab driver, who was tiring of the chase.

He looked glumly away as if he suspected our next move was to drag the river.

Two days later the enlisting office turned up in the Merchandise Mart. The officer in charge looked through my papers. He studied the birth certificate.

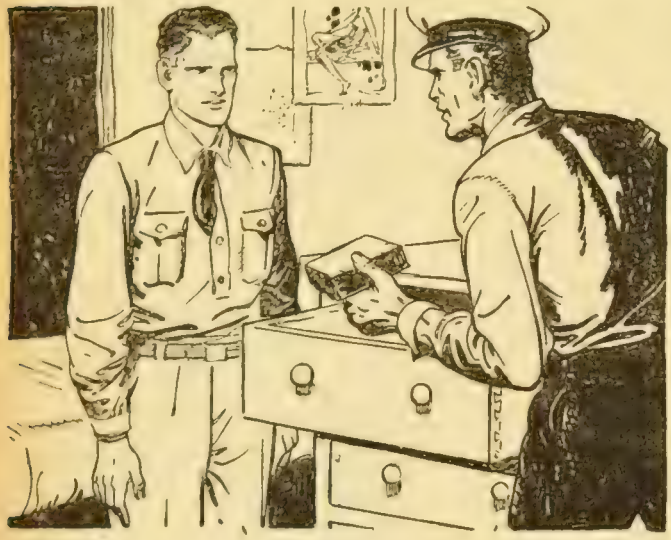
"Lester Dowd, eh?"

"Yes, sir," I said, wondering if the question of legitimacy would arise.

He pored over the records.

"Where is Yale University?" he asked, unable to resist the temptation.

"New Haven, sir," I said, when the laughter had died.



"You're the boys we're looking for," he continued earnestly. "We need men like Dewey, men like Farragut and Jones. We're counting on you boys. Wait a minute," he said, looking closer at my college record.

"Dowd, have you had two years of college math?"

"I took it at prep school, sir."

"But have you had two years of college math?"

"What sort of math is that, sir?"

"It's just two years of college math," he thundered dumbly. "The Bureau requires it. Look here"—he pointed to a list of specifications. "Two years of college math for V-7 candidates."

"But, sir, I had advanced mathematics in prep school." I clung to my point. A little thing like some misplaced trigonometry was not going to come between us.

"The Bureau says you have to take it in college. I hate to lose you, my boy, but if you haven't had two years of college math—"

"Do you actually use it?" I asked, wondering how much time John Paul found for scientific algebra.

"No," he admitted wistfully. "That's the funny thing."

I never took any mathematics in college and consequently I never got into the V-7 class. It was a disappointment. From the beginning my preference was for the Navy, a sentiment that cannot logically be explained.

"We get the cream," beamed Commander Whitman at dinner one night. He was stationed at the Great Lakes Training Center. He knew father in the last war and was a frequent visitor at our house.

"To the cream," I toasted the commander's statement.

"Be it ever so thin," muttered father, who was an Army man.

Beyond this may have lurked a subconscious desire to frustrate the best laid plans of the draft board. I could not convince myself that the Army had my best interests at heart. The Navy was different. They gave you your choice. They did until the gimmick of college math appeared.

At first I had an astronomical draft number.

"You won't go until the Germans get to Indianapolis," Mr. Green, the head of the board, advised ruefully from his office in Libertyville. There, with a pretty eye for symbolism, he had set up headquarters. When the Japs started coming through the floor, he was forced to revise the estimate. And then I redoubled my efforts. More than ever I wanted to serve with the Navy. The lure of ships can be a very potent thing.

Barred from the V-7, I was nonetheless determined to be enlisted by sundown. The Coast Guard needed men.

"Why don't you go and see them?" urged the enlisting officer. "They're on the seventh floor of the old Post Office Building."

They actually were.

It was blowing hard outside. The winter wind had pinched my eyes up protectively. I got just inside the Coast Guard quarters when the examining doctor crossed from one room to another. Spying me in the doorway, he pointed with his stethoscope and said loudly while in full flight, "You have a facial squint."

He disappeared into another room.

I moved a little slower after this burst of old family kindness. In one corner a huge man with a stomach like a barrel stood naked, waiting for his examination. As I started to take off my clothes, the doctor reappeared.

"You with the facial squint, keep your clothes on," he ordered, and came over to see me.

"We can't use a man with a squint," he menaced.

Lacking two years of college math, it was best to keep a sweet, even disposition.

"I never had squints in my life," I said irritably.

"You have now," said the doctor.

"It's just cold and windy out. As soon as I thaw out, it will be all right."

He laughed derisively.

"There's the sort of man we want"—he pointed at the Boulder Dam in the corner.

"I'm a college graduate," I said, trying to rouse his interest.

"Where did you go?" he asked absently.

"Yale University."

He placed both hands on his hips.

"Now, where is that?" he asked in a silky voice.

"Brattleboro, Vermont!" I shouted at him.

His face opened and fell.

"They moved it stone by stone." I was still shouting in the hall.

FOR a month I sulked like Achilles. It was a tantrum with limitations, however. It is not much of a sulk if you know that the local draft board can rout you out of your tent any day it chooses.

I was not the only victim of petty discrimination. Jumbo Russel, who was built like a bronze and had never known a sick day in his life, was discarded. His nose was always stuffed. No service would touch him with a ten-foot pole. Timmy Guile had an operation on his pyloric valve when he was eight months old. That put him out, in spite of the fact that twenty-three years later he was a picture of American youth. On the other hand, Mr. and Mrs. Quinn announced the enlistment of their son Walter, junior, in the paratroops. Nobody had counted on Walter for more than a couple of pints of plasma at the most. Here he was in the paratroops.

"I don't know," Jumbo told me dazedly. "It's taken a lot of wind out of my sails."

On every side one heard what a fine chap Walter was, what a wonderful fellow he always had been, and what a world of good the paratroops would do for any minor failings he might possibly have owned. Before the date of his induction, Walter Quinn, junior, was a green gem of sin.

After Walter took the high road there was feverish activity among those of military age. The young people turned to Washington in their moment of crisis. Invariably there was a friendly captain in the Bureau with a sympathy born of an ancient wedding party. He was

reached on the long-distance wire—expense was no matter when the country was imperiled—and questioned about available billets. Dealings of this sort were kept a strict secret. If the details were detected, it motivated a scene like the Oklahoma land grab as everybody between eighteen and forty-five stampeded for your claim. When successful, the lucky prospector packed his bag in the dead of night, slipped off, and was next heard from as an aide in Australia.

I concentrated on Commander Whitman, but weeks passed, and still V-7 stood on two years of college math.

"The point is," said mother, glaring at the commander, gorging himself on our very good food, "is Lester the cream or not?"

There was never a definite answer to that question. However, the commander's face and that of his wife vanished forever from our table.

I was about to give myself up to Mr. Green when a call for volunteers issued from the Navy's dirigible service.

"Men needed for lighter than air," the poster read.

I told Jumbo Russel about the opportunity.

"What are you going into?" he puzzled.

"Lighter than air," I said.

On the way to the seventh floor of the old Post Office Building, the words repeated themselves over and over in my mind. Certainly the grim ring of the Tank Corps was not there. Next to the Marines, it seemed all of elves and dewy meadows in the morning sun.

But I met the requirements and passed the exam. Afterward I watched an officer write on my jacket, "V-5, lighter than air."

"Isn't that V-5 the Naval Aviation designation?" I asked.

"Same exam exactly," he smiled. "Want to switch?"

"Why, sure," I said dreamily, "but I haven't had two years of college math." Naval Aviation takes only the cream of the cream.

"That doesn't matter to us." And he took an eraser and rubbed out "lighter than air."

"Now you're a naval air cadet. We'll call you in about two months. Glad to have you aboard, Dowd."

"Thank you, sir." My voice was a little weak. I felt as though I had just come out of ether. "Glad to be aboard, sir," I said, preparing to leave.

News that the young master had heeded the call to aerial arms was received in the household with mingled emotions. Mother and father fought the issue tooth and nail, bringing to bear such compelling arguments as the fact that, since there were already over a hundred thousand flyers in the service, what difference could one more little aviator make? By luncheon, however, they had all relented.

TO Elsa, the maid, it came as the choicest announcement since our entry into the war. Proud and Norwegian, she was outraged when the Nazis overran her homeland. Her platform went far beyond fifty old destroyers. It was her unequivocal aim to sign up me and every one of my young unemployed friends for a stand in Scandinavia. Every time the draft board whisked away another familiar face, Elsa felt her words, more than an act of Congress, were responsible for the disappearance. She and a circle of friends would celebrate the occasion over coffee and cake far into the night, concluding with patriotic songs and hymns of thanksgiving. I always felt the program was aimed point-blank at me.

To Elsa frequently fell the gruesome chore of cleaning the young master's room. Playing Hercules to my Augean stables certainly must have shaped her creed. I had no right to expect anything more complimentary than her stern words upon learning of my plans:

"Yah, Meester Lestair, now you weel keep your rum neat and tidy—yah?"

The period that followed developed into a war of nerves. The household waited tensely for my official summons to camp. Elsa answered each telephone call in a voice that dripped with anxiety; it sounded like Mrs. Judd speaking to the governor again. The faintest commotion in the vicinity of the front door sent her bolting through the house as if she expected MacArthur himself waited at attention on the Welcome mat.

Mother suffered terribly during those last weeks. She composed herself by telephoning friends and relations and notifying the countryside in general that, since we were now all awash in disaster, her son could only be happy as a naval aviator.

"Uncle George and I are so proud. Take this, dear," moaned Aunt Alice, pressing the appropriate Johnson and Johnson first-aid kit into my hand. "It has your initials on the bandaids," she added.

It was touching. I thought of all the good times I should have with the iodine.

There were other offerings. Mrs. Magnum—rather Aunt Flora, one of those aunts who isn't an aunt but whom you call aunt anyway—varied the routine by presenting the dress uniform in which her father spent most of the Spanish-American War. Aunt Flora believed wars were started to improve men's clothing.

In time the official word arrived quietly in a harmless-looking pile of Monday afternoon mail. Elsa, spying the seal of the Navy Department, stiffened and came to a perfect point over a large swollen envelope.

"What does thees mean, Meester Lestair?" she asked, suspecting it might be a peculiar naval term denoting a date far in the future.

"It means that I will report to Anacostia, D. C., for primary training the day after tomorrow," I interpreted for her intense pleasure.

MOTHER'S gala farewell was heavily attended. The company arrived near five. At first the mood was noble despair. Soon, however, the spirit of the Mardi Gras took hold.

Elsa sidled up with a tray.

"Yah, zere's zat pretty Mees Weenward. You go tell her now you're in the Navy, and then she weel marry you." She tittered as if a lot of mice had run across her stomach.

"Looks as if I'm out and Anthony Waters is in," I said, noticing Ellen's companion.

"Yah, zat Waters—a nothing, Meester Lestair."

I moved in Miss Winward's direction, and as I passed I heard mother trying desperately to explain to Mrs. Weller why the Navy did not use P-38s.

"Where is Waters?" I asked Miss Winward, leading her out on the porch.

"He's around. This is making me awfully sad, Lester," she said, bending to her glass. "I'm deeply moved. I'm tearful. Look at me."

Miss Winward had a clean, classic face that bore the ravages of her grief extremely well. Often it was set in a distant expression that forced you to conclude she was talking about one thing and thinking another.

"The pain will disappear around Tuesday," I judged.

"You're quite sure, doctor?" she laughed gaily, like a child detected.

"Quite."

"I never pine," she confessed sadly. "All the other girls are so deliriously miserable, I wonder if I'm missing something."

"Why don't you advertise a reward?"

"Would you reply?"

"I might. It was nice Waters could bring you"—I shifted to safer ground.

"He's here seeing father on some armament business, so I just asked him along," she explained carelessly. "He's handsome, isn't he?" she asked.

"He's dead in his clothes."

"He's in the foreign service, and father says he's going a long way."

"If there is anything that can be done to make the trip longer and quicker, don't hesitate to come to me."

"So witty, so bright," she mimicked. "Father says for his age his record is remarkable. Now, with the war, he'll scoot ahead."

"A shrewd judge of men, your father, but you'd better get the consensus before you go overboard for Disraeli. You know, your taste for successes runs to failure." I recalled a past enthusiasm for a title who loved her with a miner's passion. He used to look at her as if she were the Homestake claim.

"How disinterested!" she tossed. "People say you're pretty fond of me yourself, so they do."

"So they do, do, do." Discretion was leaking out of me by the quart.

"Lester," she said cautiously, "we've said some foolish things to each other."

"You once gave me an estimate for six children," I reminded her.

"Now that you're devoting your life to liberty, I don't want you to feel bound by anything that might have slipped out in the moonlight."

"I was afraid you might sacrifice yourself."

"An aviator should be single and independent. You'll be living from day to day. You'll want to be free to enjoy strong whisky and loose women," she blurted.

"Life can be beautiful!" I gasped, falling in astonishment into a chair. "A loaf of bread, a jug of wine, and the Everley sisters."

"If anything should happen to you"—she made a little feminine gesture to indicate a general disintegration.

"I wish you wouldn't do that," I said. "It upsets me."

"If anything should happen, think how dreadful it would be for the girl."

"It's the comparison that wins that point."

"You know," she said after a while, "this is going to do you a world of good. It will be the greatest experience of your life," she added in a hushed voice.

"It's bound to make the World's Fair look small," I admitted. "What's going to happen to you all this time?"

"A girl has to look out for herself," she said, looking into the living room. I saw Waters making for us. He walked importantly back on his heels.

"Good-by, darling. Do what they tell you." She kissed me lightly.

"Good luck, old man," chortled Waters. "Probably the best thing for you."

I watched them go, and then went back to the living room. Father was comparing Germany's position to her status in 1917. After an hour the party spent itself and people began to leave. There was much kissing and shaking of hands. Father went along with the majority and allowed as how everything was for the best. He prophesied I would be a better man for it. I was struck by the uplift everybody expected. People behaved as if I were going to Riggs for a cure they had long prescribed but never had the heart to tell me.

THE Anacostia Naval Base is situated between the Potomac River and a mental hospital (the Capitol is to the west), and in my day we graduated some men both to right and left. It is an area that seethes with discontent. Nobody in the hospital was quite satisfied, and it is perfectly true that one night two members shook their bounds and tried to join the V-5 by scaling the fence. Later one of our inmates snapped under the strain of an aviator's routine, and he traded over to the hospital. Each institution had one member jump into the river.

The entrance gate had the same come-hither appeal as the jaws of death. I passed through early in the morning, and was soon aware that the management was living up to its reputation.

"You'll be sorry," chanted the guard. A handful of fellow birdmen piled into a station wagon and we were off to see our skipper.

Finally a burly boy broke the ice by grunting, "Joe Foster, V. M. I. halfback. Champions in '39."

"Oh, yeah," murmured the rest in friendly recognition.

"Tim Carpenter, Virginia Wesleyan, guard. All-State last two years," volunteered another.

"Oh, sure," "Oh, yeah," chorused the others as they moved slowly into the warm, sunny light of familiarity.

Time was just about to force my hand and I was on the verge of announcing myself, "Lester Dowd, Mill Creek Hunt Club, Assistant M. F. H., with one bad fall at Rolling Rock," when the machine stopped in front of a bleak administration building. We were led into a room and addressed by the officer in charge of cadets, a salty tar with ten years' service on the good ship Procter and Gamble and two months at Quonset.

"Glad to have you men aboard," he started in a cold, clammy, institutional tone. "Men, we're in the Navy now," he announced, as if the audience were blindfolded and being led through the palace. "We're in a war. We're going to forget all that bunkaroo we learned in college"—he grinned to show how easy the process had been for him. "Men, it's a grand old flag."

Tim Carpenter, Virginia Wesleyan, All-State the last two years, shifted nervously. "Jeez," he muttered.

"Remember, men, we're all in this thing together," the commander finished, and swept into his office.

"Jeez," muttered Carpenter again.

A seaman suspected of having unusual qualities of leadership was attached to our group and given a chance to prove himself. He lined us up and marched us off to sick bay, trotting along beside like a Seeing Eye dog, and said, "Cream of da nation's yout', huh! It soitainly soured. Goin' to be da Navy's air ahm—so da Navy's got a fractured ahm."

This rich flow of American ceased only when we reached the infirmary.

"O. K., doc, pickle 'em." He turned us over for inoculations and the routine physical check-up.

For three hours the examiners went up and down my body as if it were the Atlantic City boardwalk. I made a bid for recognition in the dentist's chair. For some biochemical reason I had never had a cavity, and this scientific four-leaf clover sent the department into a tizzy. Each interne had to climb in and see for himself.

"This doesn't happen every day," one of them told me when he reappeared.

"Some mouth!" observed the chief of staff, a little more self-contained than the younger man. "You must have gotten a lot of calcium at home."

"Mother calls me Chalky," I told him.

After being pronounced fit and expendable, we were given time to make up the bunks and prepare for inspection. I hauled out the instructions dealing with the bedding. Stated in icy, precise terms, the manifesto declared, "Sheets will be drawn taut, tucked in, and folded back six inches from head of bunk."

On the surface it would seem that any normal mentality could draw taut, tuck, and measure off six inches from head of bunk. But unmentioned and unnoticed lay an adder in the bedclothes, the deadly Navy Corner. This maneuver required that you unsnarl the corner, make a series of Gray Lady passes at the linen, and finish with neat, trim results. The novice found himself enmeshed either in the springs or with something that looked like a ball of yarn. If all was not according to Edith Cavell, later in the day the inspection officer walked by, noticed the travesty, screamed like a jungle creature, and for some savage reason tore the entire thing up.

At first I thought I was simply the victim of hallowed custom and accepted the hazing with a broad grin to my fellows. But day after day my bunk looked as if demons had held a cotillion on it, while the others went unscathed. I went down to the officer to get to the bottom of things. Either it was tradition or it was sabotage.

He looked through impressive-looking files and said seriously, "Dowd, the Navy Corner seems to have you buffaloed."

"Yes, sir." Buffaloed wasn't the word.

"Some get it with no trouble at all," he mused. "Others take more time. You stick to it, Dowd. You'll get it, boy. School of Hard Knocks."

I FINALLY learned the easy way from my bunkie, Red Run, who explained embarrassedly that he knew a nurse in Clarksburg.

The instruction manual went on in the same chilly vein to explain the arrangement of articles about the washbasin: "Towels will be stowed in locker. Washcloth will be hung on gooseneck."

The gooseneck, reflection made it plain, was the nub of things. I didn't know what the gooseneck was. I approached the mate of the deck on the subject, who arose unsteadily from his seat, took my hand, and led me ceremoniously to the basin.

"This is the hot water."

"This is the hot water," I repeated as if reciting after nurse, Chapter One in the Big Animal Book.

"This is the stopper."

"This is the stopper."

Then, leaning over, he pointed underneath at an iron

intestine. "And that's the damned gooseneck!" he shouted.

Once things were on a friendly footing with the plumbing, I turned to the stowing of belongings in bureau and then waited for inspection. Except that my khaki shirts were cozily snuggled next to my black socks in the second drawer instead of under my shorts in the third drawer, all was well until a fine interpretation of the rules turned success into disaster. The boudoir booklet stated in its intimate way: "Toilet articles shall be stowed in top drawer. Bottom drawer shall be reserved for miscellaneous."

My equipment was well housed in a shaving kit, which I placed without much thought in the top drawer.

During inspection, Ensign Fitch browsed around the bureau. Opening the top drawer, he came across the kit.

"My Lord!" he screamed. "What's this doing here?"

"I have my shaving things in it, sir, and the rules—"

"I don't care if you have a skull in it!" he bellowed. "All kits are regarded as miscellaneous in the Navy and so stowed in the bottom drawer. This is a final warning."

The next day Lieutenant Sands, U. S. M. C., had the inspection. Coming to my bottom drawer, he stepped away as if he had found his wife at the Astor.

"My Lord!" he shrieked. "What is this shaving kit doing in the bottom drawer?"

"A kit is a kit, sir, and the rules state—"

"I don't care. It has shaving things in it, and as such should be stowed in the top drawer. This is your final warning."

The only way I kept myself out of trouble was by answering, "Well, Ensign Fitch says—" or, "But Lieutenant Sands says—"

THE showdown came when the men arrived together for Saturday's grand inspection. The kit was in the first drawer.

"My Lord!" shrieked Fitch. "Again!"

"I told him to put it there," said the lieutenant.

"You did, Mr. Sands?"

"A study of Rule 13, subheading 2, will disclose that shaving equipment properly goes in the first drawer," said the Marine acidly.

"So it does." Fitch was jocular. Great fighters, the Marines, but you couldn't expect Navy insight or finesse from such men. "A kit, old man, is a kit," he kindly declaimed. "If you put your hands in your shoes, that doesn't make them gloves, does it? The kit goes in the bottom," he said imperiously.

"And if you fill a potato sack with apples you still sell them over the apple counter." The Halls of Montezuma rang with the challenge. "The kit goes in the first drawer," said Sands, folding his arms and looking toward Tripoli.

"Do you really think it goes in the first drawer?" Ensign Fitch asked, admitting the need of discussion.

"I'm not sure at all," said the lieutenant. "It's the most ticklish issue I've had to face in the service."

"What do you think, Dowd?" asked Fitch, remembering that an occasional gleam of intelligence shone in the ranks.

"It seems to me, sir," I said, "that it is neither flesh nor fowl and should be stowed in the middle drawer with the underwear."

"No compromising," snapped Lieutenant Sands.

"Remember Munich," added Ensign Fitch.

Both were gallant gentlemen.

"I suppose it will have to go to Washington?" I asked.

"That's it," cried Mr. Fitch. "The Bureau!"

"The Bureau!" cried Mr. Sands.

Both men swore to see the thing through, come hell or high water.

Following the midday meal, the mail was parceled out in the bunk room. The Divine Plan provided, according to some, a particular girl for every male, and a study of the post proved the scheme was making headway. Every man was equipped with a number one woman who wrote him on an average of every other day.

Sometimes, as with "Sheep" Morgan, this routine was carried to beautiful extreme. Sheep played Abélard to a pretty thing who put out at the rate of two letters a day. She printed her name and address, "Miss Pat Clarendon, 205 Hollywood Avenue, River Valley, Va.," at the top of each effort, which looked suspiciously like a large-scale advertising scheme to the skeptics. They argued that Morgan, the cavalier, unless he had a mind like a sieve, must have known the whereabouts of his lovely. In the end, however, a correspondence estimated in tonnage proved her fidelity and the inevitable name in the left-hand corner was taken to be one of those unaccountable "little things" that made him love her so.

Miss Clarendon's regular expressions of passion were scented with a gas that screamed, not whispered, "A woman is passing by."

Her billets-doux came under the heading of freight. They were essays, wrist-thick, that described in studied detail the condition of a soul that suffered exquisitely twenty-four hours a day. Sheep's effect was cyclonic.

"Sheep, my dearest," she invariably opened, lending a rocking-chair melancholy to the flood of tender introspection that followed. "This morning before breakfast I feel electric-you-currents running through me."

By high noon there was usually a violent turn for the

worse. "The thunder that is my own Sheep peals within me," she wrote as all hell broke loose.

The afternoon journal, which carried well into the night, described post-matin developments. In the evening she knew comparative peace as he came to her "in an April way," but if the moon, in any stage of its cyclical development, showed in the sky, her prose dissolved into a baleful wail.

Sheep read these volumes as solemnly as if they were copies of the Volstead Act. Then, convinced that he still possessed the same old wham, he prepared to compose some himself. Unlike his beloved, Sheep did not burn continuously, but by staring at her picture for varied periods of time he could flare up at will. Fired by this Yogi-like exercise, he was able to match her stormy recitals. As our training progressed, I thought he was forced to wait longer and longer for inspiration. However, he married her secretly one week-end, and it is probably much prettier that way.

My own mail was far below the norm. It consisted in the main of a weekly letter from father, which habitually carried the emblazoned seal of the Racquet Club. "He's still in there," Tim Carpenter said once when he fetched me the letter, convinced that father was trapped like Floyd Collins. There were also infrequent typewritten pieces from mother, lolling at her defense post. Also I received a note from Miss Winward, telling of her monumental success selling war bonds at the Arlington Park races.

A postscript added that she was going to visit Anthony Waters and his parents at their little hideaway in the Adirondacks. Pitt the Younger was soon to sail for South America on a diplomatic junket, and since there were some gaps in his wardrobe he was enjoying a short furlough from Brooks Brothers until these vital articles arrived. . . .

There has long been a conviction among military minds,

undoubtedly founded on stout military fact, that if you can teach a body of men to walk together to the side and around corners without falling all over each other, you will instill essential fighting efficiency among them. Accordingly we devoted long hours in the afternoon to close-order drill.

The first few days were positively dangerous. We ran into each other, turned every which way, and sometimes disappeared completely. It was successive "Columns to the rear, march!" that usually drove us out of sight. Our execution of the maneuver resembled in many features the popular children's game called Red Light. One column would march stolidly into a hangar, another off into a field, and the third was once scattered by a pie wagon.

The platoon leader, an enraged Hannibal, was left at his post screaming, "Hey, you guys, come back here! Use your initiative, damn it!"

Behind me marched a young Hercules called Sam Shoden. Although he gave every indication of blooming into a fine officer, there was much of the dreamer in Sam. He marched in an offhand way, paying no heed to the commands but rather foggily taking his cue from the man directly in front of him. Every time we halted, Sam crashed into me from behind. He generated considerable power, and after several of his center bucks I was ready to leave the game. The experts prophesied a long war, and the prospect of Shoden trampling me for the duration was almost more than democracy had a right to demand.

One day as we marched the command came clearly, "Platoon, halt!"

I braced myself for the shock. But it didn't come. I turned around to see if Shoden was absent. There he was, with a grin on his face. We shook hands solemnly. It seemed to me that the country had passed over the hump.

THE six weary weeks of preliminary ground school finally passed, and one morning before daybreak we were herded into a requisitioned bus and driven to the flying field. The sight of planes lined in even rows speeded the pulse, and I was gulping down satisfaction like lotus when David Munk, a stoop-shouldered, slow-speaking lad from the West Virginia hills, ambled up. "Dowd—O. K., son," he drawled. "Ah see you have ole Glossup for an instructor. He's full of slime and vinegar, that ole boy. You'd better introduce yourself."

Mr. Glossup was standing at the moment in casual conversation with another officer across the field. I approached them from behind, noticed Mr. Glossup's stiff bearing, his ensign's rank, and an expression of perpetual discomfort on his face.

"Pardon me, Mr. Glossup. My name is Dowd. I am your new student."

He looked away from his chum and observed me coolly. Since he made no effort to speak, I found myself stuck to a gum-like monologue that went on and on like a repeating decimal.

"You're my instructor. I hope I can learn. That is, if I can't learn from you, what hope is there?"

He graciously relieved me of speech.

"When I am speaking to another, you will not interrupt me. Is that clear?" He laid equal stress on each syllable.

Something died inside me. Gone was the hope of breezy informality. This was going to be a rancid relationship conducted along specified lines.

"Meet me at the plane," commanded Glossup, adding, "and button your shirt pocket."

I walked slowly to the parachute loft, trying to release my soul like a carrier pigeon from a prison tower, but it was badly trained or underfed, and it wouldn't budge.

"Here, Mack," said the seaman in charge, handing me a parachute. "Bring it back if it don't work." And so saying, he collapsed with laughter.

His assistant, a finer man in every respect, reproached him: "Joe, ya said that fifteen times awready and it wasn't no good the first. Now, will ya shut your big face? Ya underminin' morale."

On the way down the line to the plane, a bloated yellow-colored machine known as the N3N, that didn't look as if it could fly if it had to, the friendly Glossup's voice caught up with me. "This is an indoctrination flight," said Mr. Glossup. "I'll do all the flying. You watch and try to catch the feel of it."

I climbed into the back cockpit and fastened the safety belt. Mr. Glossup looked carefully under the wings, tugged at the struts, examined the tail assembly, and then leered, "Of course you'd go up without seeing if it was all together!"

We taxied evenly out to the runway, hesitated a moment, and mounted into the sky. As my exhilaration wore off and we continued to fly smoothly around the countryside, I crossed my arms and relaxed. A flyer's life for me!

Suddenly the plane bolted upright and lurched evilly onto its side. The horizon stood on end and then disappeared. I had a spasm of fright such as you might expect if Dracula climbed into a hot bath with you. Viciously the plane snapped right side up again.

"That was a snap roll to the right," called Mr. Glossup over the gosport which made possible a one-way conversation while in flight.

I hung tightly to the sides, suspecting that when there is a snap roll to the right there too often is a snap roll to the left. Immediately the plane heaved sickly and the same maneuver was repeated on the other side.

"Did you notice that you can do a snap roll to either side?" he asked.

I nodded in assent. It was as obscure as bear tracks in new-fallen snow. Long swells of swooning sensation rippled in my stomach. I opened my collar button, ran my hand around my neck, and waited tensely for the bottom of the plane to fall out.

For his next selection Mr. Glossup pulled the throttle

back, pulled the nose up higher and higher and higher until the plane stalled, and then fell spinning toward the mother planet.

Mr. Glossup returned to level flight. "That was a normal spin," he said, unfolding his lore.

There was nothing normal about it. Perspiration ran down my face. An impotent rage welled up in me and focused itself on Glossup. Why couldn't he fly around quietly and smoothly and have a nice routine adventure instead of going berserk in the void?

Mr. Glossup chose this moment to turn the plane over on its back. I hung suspended by the safety belt. My feet fell from the pedals and flopped aimlessly under the instrument panel. A week's accumulation of small pebbles and lesser filth drifted down my pants leg. My hands fell loose and my arms dropped limply into space. This was the straw that broke the camel's equilibrium.

"Go ahead and kill me!" I sobbed, tired of living. A tide was rising in my throat.

"That was inverted flight," chirped Mr. Glossup. He looked in the reflector.

"From your ghastly pallor I judge that you are sick," he said. "May I?"

He kindly tipped the plane over to one side, affording all the comforts of home.

We turned back, while Mr. Glossup gave a bright résumé of the flight. I slumped lower and lower in the cockpit in a partial coma. In this semiconscious state I felt the wheels of the plane jar against the earth. Mr. Glossup taxied slowly back to the place on the line.

"You'll find a mop and water behind the hangar," he said to me, and walked away.

Nodding weakly, I prayed he wouldn't slip on the sidewalk and break his back in four places.

AFTER ten periods of instruction a cadet is considered safe for his first solo—an experience, he is given to understand, that is comparable to going over Niagara in a barrel. Mr. Glossup abandoned the rough-and-ready tactics of initiation and conscientiously pointed me for the Great Day. Little by little, confidence returned. By the second flight I was sitting securely in the cockpit without clawing at the upholstery, and on the third I opened my eyes. Relations between myself and the plane, however, never amounted to anything like boon companionship. Mutual trust was lacking.

Landings were the first obstacle. We had not been five minutes in the air on the first instruction when Mr. Glossup called over the gosport: "All right—keep the air speed constant, keep the wings level, and don't cross the controls. You got it!" he cried, waving his hands over his head.

Judging from this madcap gesture that nobody was at the helm, I grabbed the stick and stepped on the righ rudder as if it were a poisonous spider. The plane skidded.

"Just fly the machine—don't sprain it!" called Mr. Glossup.

I could maintain something like level flight for a while, but then a wing would dip and the plane would edge slyly off to one side.

"Watch the wings. Keep them level with the horizon," criticized Mr. Glossup.

I evened the wings.

"Watch the air speed!" he snapped.

I dropped the nose and thrust the throttle forward.

"Seventeen hundred r.p.m. is ample," said the voice. "You seem determined to ruin this engine for the better student who will follow you. Now will you look at the wings? Didn't I just explain about the wings? Use your head," he implored.

I could have managed better with another pair of hands and feet.

"Cut your gun," he moaned. "Cut your gun! We'll be over the Navy Yard, and they shoot at you."

I followed instructions to the letter and banked sharply to compensate for the errors.

"Fine, oh, fine!" the voice chided. "Wrap us up tight. We are two hundred feet above the ground and you wrap us up in a knot. Bundles for hell."

After some uncertainty we straightened up over the runway. I forced the descent by pointing the nose down.

"How deep do you intend to bury us?" asked Mr. Glossup in a resigned Oriental tone.

It was too late to make any changes. The plane hit the ground as if it had been pushed off a cliff.

"Oh!" groaned Mr. Glossup.

The plane leaped into the air like a stricken thing and then fell back.

"My!" groaned Mr. Glossup.

The plane bounced up once more and then came to a final rest.

"Lord!" breathed Mr. Glossup.

I opened the throttle and prepared to take off again.

"This is an airplane, not a yo-yo," said Mr. Glossup.

The plane staggered and swerved.

Day after day this routine was repeated as I groped for the "feel" of flying. Most of the others caught on rapidly. Tim Carpenter referred to his plane as if it were female in gender and shy by nature. Flying, for him, was just a matter of putting his arm around this pretty, fat, backward child and getting her to talk about herself. With Tim it was love at first flight.

"I give her throttle, but she says, no, she don't want to come around. So then I give her more throttle, and she comes around so nice and sweet—and puts her nose just where I want it."

As far as I was concerned, "she" was just a dumb animal. With "us" it was a marriage of convenience. After the crisis, when the children were old enough to know, there would be a quick divorce. She would go her way and I would go mine, and there would be an end to this silly pretending.

The day for my first solo arrived at 5 A. M., like all the other days. It had unconsciously developed tremendous importance. All the letters from home ended with "Love, and have you soloed yet?" On the eve of the big game there was an ominous telegram of good cheer from father:

"Best of luck, son. Everybody here hopes you make it."

The message was apprehensive. There seemed to be some doubt in the family.

Before we left for the field, Chief Connolly, a kindly man with six service stripes who lectured us in the theory of flight, called me aside. "Son, I see you're up to solo." He smiled. "Next to your wedding night," he said, moving closer, "it's the greatest thrill of your life."

Although the chief had never flown in his long, rich career, he had insisted on this bizarre comparison all through his course. I often speculated on the aeronautical nature of his nuptials, which must have taken an odd birdlike turn.

On my way to solo, I passed Mr. Glossup.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

"I'm up for my solo, sir," I said.

"My Lord!" he muttered. He walked away, taking extra large steps which soon developed into a trot. When last seen, he was running for the officers' ready room. I could see him making all the arrangements, passing his hat, calling the florist. The maestro was a very considerate man.

Reaching the plane, I smiled thinly at the mechanic and made a precautionary investigation of the plane. Finally convinced that all was according to Hoyle, I taxied gingerly out to the runway strip. I looked up at the tower—somebody waved—locked the tail wheel, applied full "trottle," and put in a rush call for St. Jude. The plane left the ground as it was supposed to, and I headed for the hinterlands. If I was coming down like a rock, I was coming down unobserved in the country, as a gentleman should.

As soon as I was decently out of sight, I began to fly aimlessly in large pot-bellied circles. After twenty minutes I convinced myself I could stay up or come down at will. Flying was enjoyable! If I skidded in the turns, the Glossup lash could not fall on my shoulders. If I wandered off the heading, there was no one to object. My control over the plane was absolute. I was sure in my mastery. Could this be love? I jammed the nose down and pulled it right back up. That was the way to treat the little woman.

After an hour of sleighing about the sky, I started back to the field. There would be no little enjoyment in striding unconcernedly past Glossup. I practiced a suitable monologue in the smug dialect of the experts.

"VERY nice upstairs today, Glossup. Very nice indeed. Smooth at four thousand. Average r.p.m. 1,700, fuel pressure 35. The left wing was a little heavy, but that doesn't bother us, does it, Ace?"

I might throw in a nudge under his Navy wings, a sort of fraternal high sign.

I turned my attention to Number 296. We had never got along like this before. Perhaps it wasn't too late to try again.

"Oh, you beautiful doll!" I sang, and patted her on the instrument panel.

The field was below now. I followed the correct procedure and prepared to land.

"Oh, you beautiful doll, you great big beautiful doll!" I courted extravagantly.

The approach was professional. The tail struck lightly, and the wheels followed immediately. It was a perfect landing. We rolled swiftly down the runway. There was a noticeable swaying to the right.

"Easy, dear," I called in alarm.

I moved the stick to counterbalance the disturbance. There was no response. We skidded. We spun around in a circle. After two dizzy gyrations we stopped at a crazy angle on the runway. The propeller continued to spin absurdly.

All the cadets had gathered in a bunch in front of the hangar and focused their twenty-twenty vision on me and my situation. The crash truck, with officers hanging from every rung, was a red blur streaking down the runway.

"Are you all right?" The officer of the day asked for the records.

I nodded.

Mr. Glossup crammed his large face into the cockpit.

"You ground-looped!" he gasped. "You ground-looped, you idiot!"

"I didn't do it. She did it!" I pointed all over the plane.

"You unlocked the tail wheel too soon," bawled Mr. Glossup. "You idiot."

No amount of technical evidence could persuade me that I had not been deceived by feminine guile in a highly mechanized form.

In council it was decreed that I should solo again the following day. I still felt that I had been purposely sacked by Number 296. There she stood, tinted, vain, and defiant. There was about her something wild and unprincipled.

"You St. Louis woman!" I cursed her softly.

MR. GLOSSUP was a man of strong passions, but what brought foam to his mouth quicker than anything was to have one of his students get lost. It was not uncommon for a cadet to phone the field and sheepishly report himself down on a wayward farm. Then Mr. Glossup would have to set out like a dutiful St. Bernard and scour the countryside for his strayed charge. He said this made him look silly before the other instructors, and I gathered he would rather hide me than hunt me.

Mindful of this, I did my flying fairly close to the field. Using the Lincoln Memorial as the mariner's best friend and guiding myself by a bend in the river and a railroad track, I consistently returned to the premises. One afternoon I was practicing wingovers for the final check with such intensity that I failed to notice a strong wind was blowing me far off my heading. When I straightened up and turned for home, the monument was nowhere to be seen. The Lincoln Memorial does not wander around much, and its sudden removal from the scene was a rending shock. Still, it was no time to lose one's head. The Anacostia River was there, and so was the railroad. Where you have two quantities you can always find a third, echoed the teachings of a mathematical master in whom I once put my trust. However, the river wound aimlessly and endlessly and the railroad went to Florida. With those two quantities, you could find everything but the third.

For a while the country resembled a familiar face whose name temporarily slips the mind. However, instead of becoming increasingly familiar, the countryside developed a dreadful sameness. I might as well have been over trackless sands.

The gas was running low. My blood turned to baking powder at the thought of calling Mr. Glossup, but a large and spacious field was directly below. It was the time and place to make a forced landing.

The field was an unfurrowed pasture peopled by cattle. To get in comfortably you had to come close to a barn. I circled several times and finally glided down. The wheels grazed the barn, and then I was on the ground, swerving through disinterested cows.

I climbed out of the plane and started up the road toward the white stucco house to make my report to the owner. Suddenly a black face in old working clothes popped out of the bushes.

"Hello," I said. "Where am I?"

"Missy Fletcher's," said the darky, grinning broadly.

Twenty yards farther up the road another colored figure popped out of the bush, and then another. One after one, they fell in behind me. Thus a little band, numbering eventually eight, marched single file on Missy Fletcher.

The company rounded a turn in the road, where before us stretched a beautiful lawn down which a trim middle-aged lady came streaming.

"Are you all right?" she asked breathlessly. "We watched you from the house. I thought certainly you'd hit the barn."

"Yes; perfectly," I said when she had finished. "I'm sorry to cause such a disturbance."

"Don't be silly," she said. "I'm awfully glad you didn't hit the barn, though. My husband loves that barn. He'd shoot you if you damaged it."

"He would?" I asked, beginning to wonder about this strong-willed spouse.

"You're one of the Navy boys at Anacostia, aren't you?" she asked.

"Yes; I'm a cadet." And I told her how I got lost and explained I ought to notify my instructor.

She took me up to the terrace and into the house. "Here's the phone. Tell them you're at Beeville, two miles south of the river on the Wilmot intersection. I'll go get some milk and cookies and we'll wait for your instructor friend."

"He's no friend," I said.

Finally I reached Mr. Glossup.

"Where are you?"

I relayed the information Missy Fletcher had given me.

"When I find you I've got a few things to say!" he bellowed, and slammed down the receiver.

Missy Fletcher appeared with the prisoner's last meal.

"You shouldn't have done that," I said numbly.

"Come out on the terrace," she said, leading me through the dining room.

"Who's that?" I asked, pointing to a portrait of a naval officer.

"That's Admiral Fletcher. He's my husband."

"Admiral?" I gasped. "Where is he, out in the barn?"

"He is not," she said sharply. "He's on an aircraft carrier in the Pacific."

"Oh, no! Oh, no—" I muttered, sinking weakly into a chair. "He can make it very uncomfortable for me." I indicated the portrait.

"Don't be silly," said Mrs. Fletcher. "Besides, it was a very nice landing and you didn't hit the barn."

A HALF-HOUR passed pleasantly, and then a yellow trainer appeared above.

"It's him!" I cried, jumping up. "Let's go down and watch him land."

Mr. Glossup circled about.

"I hope he doesn't hit the barn," worried Mrs. Fletcher.

Mr. Glossup pulled back. The plane got over the barn, but the tail knocked the weather vane over, and Mrs. Fletcher gasped. The plane landed unsteadily, and wavered on the ground. Just at this moment one of the cows, which were herded docilely on one side of the field, began to lope across the meadow.

"Oh, Elvira!" cried Mrs. Fletcher.

Mr. Glossup hadn't enough control to maneuver himself. The left wing caught the animal flush and drooped back like a useless limb. Mrs. Fletcher covered her eyes. When she had courage enough to look out on the bright world again, Mr. Glossup was running toward us, hollering at the top of his lungs, "That damn cow!"

"What a dreadful man!" murmured Mrs. Fletcher.

"Quite," I said.

Mr. Glossup's headlong charge had carried him right on top of us. "You," he said, turning on me. "I have had miserable, fumbling students in my time, but of all the—"

Before he got well into one of his rich descriptive passages I inserted loudly:

"Sir, this is Mrs. Admiral Fletcher. Admiral Fletcher is her husband is Admiral Fletcher." I stressed the point. "He loves his barn," I added.

Mr. Glossup wilted. Mr. Glossup faded. He looked like a plant out of which all the chlorophyll has been drained. He turned away in discomposing silence.

"A cooky, sir?" I offered him my last.

He turned back to Mrs. Fletcher.

"How do you do, ma'am?" he managed hoarsely. "I am an ensign instructor at Anacostia."

"They also serve," said Mrs. Fletcher sweetly.

"About that cow," he said.

"She's all right now," soothed Mrs. Fletcher, smiling. "About that barn—"

"It will be fixed in no time," said Mrs. Fletcher.

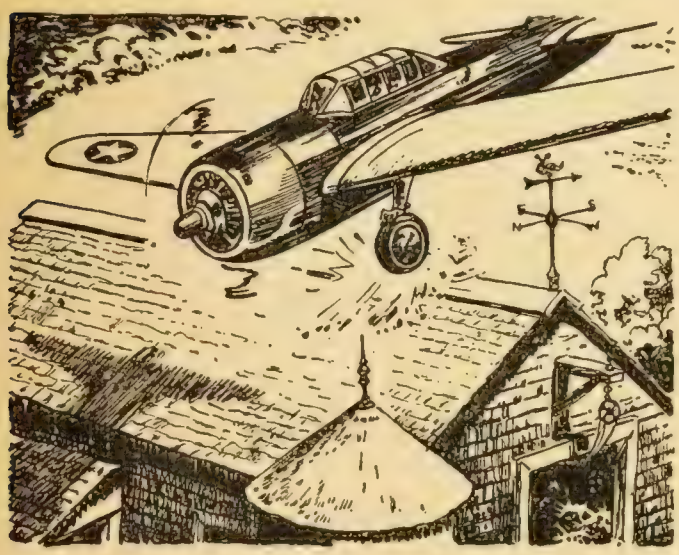
"Well, we have to be going," Mr. Glossup said hastily. "I'll send a mechanic back to fix the plane."

"Good-by, Mrs. Fletcher," I said. "Thanks for everything."

Mr. Glossup said nothing the entire way home. Several times he shook his head. In the pleasant late-afternoon half-light he must have brooded humbly on the pains of pricking Fortune.

THE days following my flight to the admiral's back yard were uneventfully completed and I passed into the "B" stage. Mr. Glossup, replete with a pistol, whip, and white chair, drilled me over and over under the big blue tent. I snarled some, but never clawed him.

For two weeks I struggled for precision, learned to land in a circle and how to make emergency landings. Gradually my status changed, and at the end I was regarded



more as a cripple who had learned to tap-dance than as a sort of floating hazard.

I passed my twenty-hour check and became eligible for advanced training at Corpus Christi. After the ordeal Mr. Glossup called me aside. "Well, I got you through." He broke down completely in private. It was Glossup unmasked. "And do you know what did it? Psychology!" He mouthed the password.

I stood mute before the revelation, deprived of my faculties.

A new cadet sidled up, not at all sure of his ground. "Pardon me," he introduced himself. "My name is Green. I am your new student."

Mr. Glossup winked at me. Cunning lit his eyes. "When I am talking to another, you will not interrupt me. Is that clear?" he asked evenly and icily. He turned back to me. "Good luck at Corpus Christi," he said under his breath.

"Take over, Freud!" I murmured.

WE weren't ordered to Corpus Christi until October 16. There was time for a three-day leave in Chicago. I arrived home on a bright October day. When I reached the house, mother came squealing down the stairs. Father emerged from the library in a cloud of smoke.

"My baby!" cried mother, swamping me with affection. "Just talk, dear," commanded mother. "How did they treat you? Did they whip you?"

"No, they didn't whip me."

"Talk, Lester," mother said.

"There was a young man from Racine."

"Talk about horsepower," mother urged.

Unwillingly I was launched on a technical lecture concerning aerodynamics and the theory of flight, power plants, and the complex mechanics of the carburetor. They looked at each other and then at me and then back to each other with the incredulity of two yokels gazing for the first time upon the marvelous doings of the latest electric icebox.

"Isn't that wonderful!" mother broke in. "He used to be so vapid," she said to father.

Father and I retired to the library and fell to discussing the progress of the war. We talked on awhile until I heard the buzz of quiet talk in the front hall. I recognized mother: and then in a warm, agonizing flash I knew the other voice.

"Is that who I think it is?" I asked father.

"That's who it is," said father sympathetically.

It happens that mother is one of those collectors for whom a family photograph is "a thing of beauty and a joy forever." Her albums fill bins. Casual, candid work she did herself. However, grand occasions were entrusted to the professional hands of Mr. Raymonde, a man whose highly stylized work could be recognized as Milestones Along Life's Thorny Path. It included such items as The First Birthday, Little Hunter, Achilles, and a succession of graduations.

"Lester," mother called, "Mr. Raymonde is here to take a few pictures of you."

"He just made it, didn't he?" I said suspiciously. "I'll bet you've had him locked in the attic for days."

"Don't be absurd, dear. He stayed in your room last night just to be ready when you came," said mother. "Here he is, Mr. Raymonde," she added, leading me gingerly into the hallway.

"Ah," said Raymonde hungrily. "I suggest we go into the garden."

I stood fast.

"Why don't you go into the garden with Mr. Raymonde?" asked mother in distress.

"I won't do it."

Mr. Raymonde absented himself by gazing out a window until the situation settled.

"What had you planned, Mr. Raymonde?" mother asked.

Mr. Raymonde turned, raised one hand and waggled its fingers. "I visualize him framed in the second arch by the sundial, leaning against the stone-work, chrysanthemums banked behind. His young face buried in a copy of Jane's Fighting Ships."

THERE was a moment of stunned silence.

Mother recovered first. "Oh, really," she said in a childlike voice as if she had just seen angels. "How nice, how terribly nice!"

"We'll call it I Must Go Down to the Sea Again," suggested father.

After much bickering we compromised on several sullen poses in the library.

"I am more than a photographer," Mr. Raymonde avowed at the end of the ordeal. Nobody doubted that for a minute.

I started upstairs to change from my uniform into a pair of tattered flannels. Before I had taken two steps mother came over to the banister and commenced.

"Lester," she started, "I don't ask much, do I?"

"Now, there is a silly question."

"I mean you don't think of me as the typical demanding mother, do you?" she persisted.

"No, dear, you've been more like a foreman to me," I said devotedly.

"Do me a favor, will you?" she asked. "I promised Mrs. Prentiss, Mrs. Bishop, Mrs. Brooks, and Mrs. Paul that you'd go to see them this afternoon. Will you do it?—in your uniform," she instructed.

"In my uniform!" I moaned.

"You can't take it off," she said sternly, pointing an accusing finger at me. "Don't tell me. I know."

"Nobody will care."

"If you go to see those people, I won't talk," she bribed. "They all expect you. They simply want to look at you, that's all."

"If you hired a float, we could make scheduled trips around Market Square," I proposed in defeat. . . .

It was not until the next evening that I had a chance to see Miss Winward. I went over after dinner, and found her alone before a noisy fire, knitting something blue and shapeless. A pair of glasses were pushed back on her head, where they were of questionable value. Her blouse,

sweater, and skirt were all slightly displaced by the fury of her knitting, but somehow it all blended in a fancy disarray. She was so absorbed in her labors she did not notice me enter.

"Whose what will that warm?" I asked from the door.

"Lester!" she cried, jumping up and coming at me like a picador with the anonymous drygoods still impaled on the needles.

"You'd better put those knives down," I cautioned. "For

whom are you working your pretty fingers to the bone?"

"That's going to be a mitten for Anthony."

"For Waters?"

"I've had a wonderful time with him."

"Up in the Adirondacks?" I asked, pressing for information.

"Yes; that was lovely."

I winced.

"When I am with him," she continued, "I have the feeling that I am in touch with the importance of our day."

"It must be like sleeping in a newspaper."

We talked aimlessly for hours. Occasionally I could hear the hall clock strike. Finally, exhausted of inconsequentials, the conversation flickered and went out. I watched her bend over, silently attack the knitting. For some reason I began to wonder if Waters had ever kissed her, and if so, how he went about it.

"Lester," a voice broke into my thought. "I've been thinking that you and I ought to have a relationship."

"If you'd sat still for another two seconds there'd be no necessity for long-range planning."

"Platonically, I like you better than any one in the world," she announced, sucking on one of the long white needles; "and now that I'm entering a new stage in my development, I don't want to lose you."

"What new stage are you entering?" I asked abruptly.

"Never mind what stage. But afterward everything will be different."

"I can't hang around you like a pool hall while you're developing," I argued.

"Always so restless! Like a little boy. You never will grow up," she said sadly.

"I don't know. Everybody says I'm much improved."

She was silent again. "I'm getting sleepy," she remarked casually at last.

"You'd better go to bed, then."

"Good night," she agreed promptly. "See you tomorrow."

AT home later, I telephoned the airport and inquired about my ticket to Corpus Christi. Tomorrow and I weren't there together.

The other wing wearers from Anacostia had arrived before me. All were impressed by the station's vastness, its organization and smartness.

The Navy functioned, to do it credit, just as it did in the Temperate Zone. We were assembled, greeted, and told that the first week was another stretch of indoctrination. The prime object of indoctrination here was to acquaint oneself with the jangled jargon of the public-address system, which controlled the entire day.

"There it goes again!" said Red Run in the terror of ignorance.

We watched a group, for whom this esoteric pealing held special meaning, take up their belongings and move crisply to a scheduled activity.

"It's like Finnegans Wake," I said in exasperation.

Finally the riddle resolved itself in symphonic form. It all originated in the battalion office. At six o'clock in the morning a bugle opened the movement with a strong presentation of the ever-endearing reveille. This gave way to the brassy "Fall out for chow." After breakfast the low moan of a stricken thing was eerily reproduced as the wood winds took up the theme and announced "sick call." For the next twelve hours the merry din of "bells, bells, bells" told of ground school, athletics, drill, study period, and sundry musters, a routine varied only by a male solo interrupting in a robust bass with the charming aria entitled, "Will Cadet Mason call Amber 3200 and ask for Miss Rose?"

THE third movement was tinged by experimentalism. The psychiatrist on the base had succeeded with the theory that music improves digestion and had arranged to have every evening meal formation concluded with some celebrated selection. Military factors decreed that the modern ballad softened the tissues of fighting men and determined instead on John Philip Sousa. Here I thought the composition failed miserably. After dinner is the last time to remind a volunteer warrior of his trade. Any practicing specialist who believes a gastric juice is hoodwinked into working overtime by the demoniac strains of The Black Horse Troop March should have his license suspended. At ten fifteen the opus ended on the appealing note of taps.

Admittedly, a pilot must be in prime physical condition. The athletic period that induced this state of being was a model of Spartan severity. Most of the program was drawn from the Inquisition, and that part of the day when everything stopped for muscles was glumly anticipated like a plague year.

Charged with the "toughening-up" process was a commissioned Apollo of large and lovely proportions, which he marvelously maintained without doing the exercises. Wear and tear strikes a gym master most frequently in the larynx, and our Legree, by long and faithful service, had literally blown his lungs out. His assistant, a junior-grade lieutenant, and a blueprint for the strong, silent type, strolled among the toilers, watching to see that no sinew flagged. He spoke on an average of once every three days. When the company was reduced by exertion to gasps and groans, he made a very real contribution by snarling:

"Pipe down, over there!"

After the hell of calisthenics we were run over to the commando course, designed by some twisted mind to produce in a short time, in a small space, on a large number, the effect of crossing the Sahara on roller skates. First there was a short address by Apollo.

"The beauty of this thing izzat it's practical," he beamed. "No empty theory. F'rinstance, let's take you, there, as an example." He motioned me out of ranks.

"Let's suppose your plane has crashed," he said fancifully. "You're twenty miles from camp an' a hunert Japs are racin' up the beach. You got one chance. You make a break for the jungle in the direction of your lines. Git goin'!" he ordered.

"And camp only twenty miles away," I breathed.

The course curved and doubled back, so that no matter how fast I ran he could always keep apace by walking across the different legs. When I got to the first obstacle he was there with instructions.

"First you come upon a log four feet high. You hoidle it."

"You never go around it?" I asked.

"You hoidle it," he said.

I "hoidled" and went on.

"Now you stumble on a huge piece of pipe."

"How did that get there?" I asked unevenly, experiencing some difficulty in breathing.

"Missionaries, I guess. You crawl troo it," he told me.
"You never go around it?"
"You crawl troo it."
I crawled and raced ahead.
"Here you discover a shallow stream eighteen feet wide. You leap across it."
"You never wade?" I heaved, trying to catch my wind.
"You always leap."
Back in the clear again, I stumbled blindly ahead until a cargo net stretching eighty feet in the air made progress overland impractical.
"Mango trees," said the travel guide solemnly. "You climb up hand over hand. Wild country, isn't it?"
"What did we come this way for?" I complained brokenly. "Route 42 is clear all the way."
"Git goin'. The Japs are gainin' all the time."
"What about you?" I asked—as if I cared.
I swayed weakly in the hemp. My legs shook and I fell the last twenty feet.
"Down at the bend there is a barricade. You gotta hurry. The enemy is right behind," he revealed.
"Where are the Marines?" I whispered inaudibly, unable to speak as I tottered drunkenly to the finish line.
The next stage of training was called basic and regarded by those who handled it as a finishing process.
Civilly, it had its counterpart in a semester at charm school. Much specious talk was devoted to the "unpredictable," a lively elusive topic discussed in the most abstract terms. The best minds in the squadron were unable to corner, capture, and pigeonhole the "unpredictable." It might be a cow on the runway, a snowstorm in June, but whatever form the "unpredictable" took, the well trained cadet was supposed never to turn a hair. We were taught to miff the "unpredictable."
After some preliminary instruction which attempted to develop a classical restraint in my landings, I started to use up the allotted solo periods.
"Practice those landings," the instructor advised.
I had a habit of coming thirty feet over the runway and dropping on it like a plummeting hawk.
"More swoop," said the instructor.

ONE morning I was dutifully practicing my scales on an outlying field when the weather, which had been cloudless and bright since dawn, turned genuinely vile. The ceiling fell below two hundred feet as an enveloping fog swept in off the bay. It was the "unpredictable" in the flesh. While there still was room and time, I dove down and executed a rough but harmless landing. In another minute the ceiling fell to zero.
On a corner of the field was a telephone shack. Unlocking the controls, I scrambled over to notify the authorities of my doings. That was what a wise old hand always did in such circumstances.
Above the telephone were instructions. Some one with an eye for simplification had written, "Raise the receiver and ask for Chief of Operations."
I complied, and was immediately connected with a languid voice, as of a child who had adapted herself easily to our age of violence.
"Is this heah a crash call?" she drawled with a minimum of interest.
"No, it isn't. I want to get the Chief of Operations."
"Ah'll ring," said the operator. There was some congestion on the line, and before I was set a firm voice said, "Chief of Operations Kenwood speaking."
"Sir, this is Aviation Cadet Dowd, Class 10-D, flying an S.NV, Number 131, from Squadron 12-A. I was working on Field 30 when the fog came in, and I thought it imprudent to continue."
I stopped and wished I had not said "imprudent." There was a pause as both parties took up slack. Then the Chief of Operations opened.
"Dowd, that's splendid. I couldn't ask for more."
"Thank you, sir," I said. "Any one would of done the same."
"No," insisted Mr. Kenwood. "It was the 'unpredictable' and you handled yourself like a veteran."
"Thank you, sir. With such training I couldn't help myself," I added, as long as we were rolling about together on the warm sands of mutual esteem.
"Stay there for a while. The weather report says it will be clear shortly."
"Aye, aye, sir."
In a little while the fog began to lift. I got back into the plane to warm it up and be ready to take off when the ceiling permitted. I started to taxi to the other end of the field. But the plane would not move. Perhaps the ground was soft. It had not rained in months, but there is no accounting for soft ground. I applied a generous amount of throttle, but the plane would not move. More throttle. This had no more effect than before. However, the tailpiece rose gamely three or four feet, and I maintained this attitude for several minutes, praying that the wheels would take the hint. There was no forward motion. I knew the brakes were locked.
I knew this because I had locked them before leaving the plane. All veterans do so. What I did not know was how to unlock them. I had never been told how to unlock the brakes. It was time for productive reflection. The skies were clear again, and some one anxious to improve his style was certain to report me forced down. In my new exalted status of veteran, I could not afford to be caught with my brakes locked. It would be decidedly imprudent.
Back in the shack, the instructions above the phone presented the problem plainly. I calculated that Red Run, who was in the afternoon wing, would be in the barracks at this time. He would know how to take the brakes off. He was filled with that sort of data. If the operator could be coaxed into committing a minor infraction, God would stay in His heaven and I could still be a veteran.
I lifted the receiver, and Miss Gloom, apparently accustomed only to casualties, began her pretty lines:
"Is this heah a crash call?"
"No; no, it isn't," I said freshly, trying to convey an extraordinary soundness of limb and body. "Can you just connect me with Cadet William Run in the barracks?"
"Ah jus' take crash calls. Ah jus' call Chief of Operations."
Outside I heard a faint droning. That would be some Lochinvar reporting me down. In minutes now the news would be abroad in the field.
I concentrated on Miss Gloom. I explained slowly, patiently, heart-breakingly, but I couldn't get through.
"Ah jus' call Chief of Operations."
There was a roar as a plane zoomed over the field. "He's here. He'll land," I groaned.
"Shall ah call Chief of Operations?" Miss Gloom asked.
"Oh, no, forget it," I said wearily. "We'll just call it the failure of a mission."
An officer with the rank of a lieutenant commander approached.
"Kenwood, Chief of Operations. Anything wrong here? What's the matter?" he asked.

"THE brakes are locked, sir. I don't know how to unlock them," I blurted.
"You just tap the pedals," he said in amazement. "Just tap them."
"Oh," I said.
"That's the damnedest thing I ever heard," he said, getting somewhat redder. "A man in basic doesn't know how to take the brakes off."
"Nobody ever showed me, sir," I said lamely.
"Everybody knows how to take the brakes off," he barked. "What sort of technique is this? What would you do in the 'unpredictable'?" he sneered. "What's your name?"
"Dowd, sir. Class 10-D."
"Oh, no!" he groaned. "Dowd, Class 10-D, Squadron 12-A?" he asked fearfully.
"Yes, sir," I said wretchedly.
He turned away, and then whirled on me.
"It's the damnedest thing I ever heard! You're not safe to solo. I'm going to ground you, Dowd. You'll have to go before the Board." He walked off in a rage. And he proved as good as his word. He summoned me to appear before the Board's regular Monday morning session and explain my deficiency with the brakes.
Going before the Board was serious business. It was trouble. The Board acted as a high court. If a cadet was

unable to meet his flying requirements, or if he was guilty of some outlandish aerial escapade, he was haled before the Board. There the records were carefully examined and the defendant's argument heard. If the case went against him, the cadet was "washed out" and his flying career terminated as of that date. Theoretically, you could go beyond the Board and appeal to the Admiral. If the Admiral turned you down, I suppose it was within your rights to go to Washington and appeal to the Chief Executive. It had never been done. Some day, however, an enterprising cadet is going to get extra time from Mrs. Roosevelt.

News of my predicament spread rapidly. The fighting Fifth Battalion was behind me to a man. Several privately confessed they did not know how to release the brakes themselves. They thanked their gods the "unpredictable" had not turned on them, as it had on me.

The next morning I dressed in my blues. You were required to go before the Board shined and polished, and it was to your advantage to do so. To some extent the decision was influenced by the defendant's bearing.

I arrived at the Administration Building a few minutes before eight. The secretary was flitting around the table, placing the chairs and arranging papers. I asked her to give me some idea of the execution, and she outlined the entire procedure.

"Lieutenant Commander Wells, the squadron's skipper, sits at the head of the table. Lieutenant Commander Kenwood sits here; Lieutenant Commander Wright, in charge of ground school, sits here; Lieutenant Commander Apelgate, in charge of cadets, sits here; and Ensign Higs sits here."

"What happened to Higs?" I asked.

"He's the psychiatrist," she said reverently.

"What's he doing here?"

"He knows more about you than you know about yourself. Freud and all that."

MY name was called. I walked in straight and stiff as if I had spent four years at Culver.

"Aviation Cadet Lester Dowd, Class 10-D," I announced properly.

"It's the cadet with the brakes," whispered Mr. Kenwood to the skipper. It meant something special to them, but it sounded as though I had come equipped with hydraulics.

"Oh, yes," said the skipper, thumbing through papers.

"Sit down, Dowd," said Mr. Wells.

"Thank you, sir."

"What's this about the brakes?" he asked petulantly.

"I didn't know how to unlock them, sir," I confessed.

"Yes, you did," he insisted impatiently. He swung sideways on his chair, raised his feet off the floor, and waggled them in even unlocking motions. "That's all you do. You know how to do that."

"I didn't then."

"You did too!" he thundered. "Anybody can do that any time. Kenwood can do it, Wright can do it, Apelgate can do it!" he roared, pointing around the table. "Higs can do it," he added as an afterthought, motioning to the psychiatrist.

"Nobody told me how, sir," I tried to explain.

"Nobody has to tell you a thing like that!" bellowed Mr. Wells. "You do it naturally."

Ensign Higs leaned forward. "Was there something on your mind?" he asked softly.

The question was aimed point-blank at the unconscious. If I said "no" it would convey the impression of an old vacant lot, and everybody would lose interest. The trial was going against me.

"Come, now, what was on your mind?" he said again, feeling that this was definitely the psychiatrist's province.

"What's that got to do with it, Higs?" snapped Mr. Wells, who had no use for the psychiatrist. "If a man can't think and release brakes"—he waggled his feet some more—"then the Navy doesn't want him."

"Dowd, you wait outside a minute," urged Mr. Higs.

After I closed the door, the discussion mounted and fell in waves on Mr. Higs. I could hear the muttered rumblings as the Board fought to a just decision.

Time dripped slowly by. Ensign Higs must be fighting 'em hard with Freud. Everybody else knew that everybody knows about brakes. Then, at last:

"Mr. Dowd," said the secretary.

I walked back into the room.

"Aviation Cadet Dowd," began Lieutenant Commander Wells, "it costs the Navy twenty-seven thousand dollars to train you. To date we have squandered approximately fourteen thousand to that purpose. It is the considered opinion of this Board that we are in too deep to expel you, and therefore we have decided, in spite of the risk, to continue your flight training."

"Thank you, sir," I beamed. Higs and Freud had come through.

I once took some vocational tests at the Stevens Institute in Hoboken. The results proved to everybody's satisfaction that, as far as science could tell, I had no scientific bent whatsoever. If any additional evidence were necessary, I remember Mr. Glossup, back at Anacostia, was moved to shout at me, "There is not a mechanical gene in your entire make-up!"

I believe there was one in the beginning, but it collapsed early in life when father kept bringing me Zeus Chemical Sets to play with. Like many forward-thinking men, he believed science might yet save us, and he was determined I should know about it. Sometimes he brought home two sets a week. Nobody in the household dared throw the things out, for fear they might "go off." Consequently, they piled up untouched in my room until one rainy afternoon I turned to the compounds in desperation for amusement. I decided to concoct some green ink, the young Edison's equivalent of baking-powder biscuits. There were four separate experiments, but each one turned out brown, made a stain, and smelled.

With this behind me, I anticipated the difficulties of the instrument squadron, a technical hell if ever there was one. The work was pure science from the top of the bottle. Everybody had trouble with the course, but I left a dubious record behind. Nobody has yet approached the cockeyed splendor of my first attempt in the Link trainer.

Most of the training took place on the ground, in an electrically operated apparatus that resembled a stuffy fuselage mounted on springs. Inside it was the duplicate of a cockpit and instrument panel complete with compasses, artificial horizon, rate of climb, altimeter, and air-speed indicator. Such was the Link trainer. There was just room enough for the pilot, who squeezed himself inside and pulled a lid down over him. When the instructor, who sat at the control table, turned on the power, actual conditions of instrument flight were reproduced. The problem, of course, was to keep the trainer in a normal attitude solely by reference to a batch of gadgets.

THE instructors for this business were taken from the enlisted personnel—fine, kind-hearted men, for the most part. Among them, however, were scattered a few saps. The title of instructor raised the sailor to temporary authority over the cadets, who as commissioned officers would soon crack the whip themselves. The opportunity was too good to be missed. I won't say that Machinist's Mate Briggs, to whom I was assigned, abused the privilege. Rather, he lived on it.

His welcoming blast was, "In peacetime you couldn't get into the Navy." Then he carefully went over everything, occasionally dropping a remark that clarified his position in regard to cadets.

"I know you ain't listening," he said in a sarcastic voice. "It's too much to expect."

"I'm listening," I said.

"You're all alike. You don't want to learn. I stand here and talk my bloody heart out, and I never found a cadet yet who listened. Jeez, when I think how the calyouber of officers has dropped lately, I wonder if we'll pull through. Well, it ain't for me to question. I'm just a sailor takin' orders, doin' my job. I'll go on talkin', knowin' damn well you ain't payin' any attention."

It took some time to get through the lecture. Before we finished, Briggs arrived at the conclusion that I was "just like the rest of 'em. Got nothing but Sammy Kaye on your mind."

"I'm not very mechanical," I said.

"Brother, you better get mechanical," he snorted, preparing to start me on the familiarization hop.

I climbed uncertainly into the trainer, put the earphones on, and pulled the hood down. It was hot inside. One dim light illuminated the instrument panel.

Briggs called over the radio, "Are you calm?" He insisted that his pupils keep calm.

"I'm calm," I said, fighting down the hysterical feeling that seizes me when pillows are clamped down over my head.

"You don't sound calm," said Briggs, and before I was quite ready he turned on the electricity.

"Hey!" I shouted.

"Keep calm in there!" called Briggs. "Remember, the standard climb is five hundred feet a minute. Watch your instruments."

I looked at the instruments. They seemed to be watching me.

"C'mon, take off!" called Briggs impatiently.

I heaved back on the stick and jammed the throttle all the way forward. At this the instruments, which had been twitching in excitement, went hog wild. The whole panel went into a sort of Disney dance. The altimeter spun around dizzily. The rate of climb soared. The artificial horizon bolted from sight and the readings on the compasses flew in an unintelligible blur.

"YOU'RE climbing straight up all over the place," called Briggs in alarm.

When nothing else worked, I beat both fists on the panel, remembering the classic cure for faulty radios. It seemed to prick the instruments on to even madder revels. The magnetic compass, besides dashing one hundred and eighty degrees from side to side, now bobbed delightedly up and down.

"Straighten out!" bawled Briggs, who had never seen anything like this before.

It was out of my hands. I sat helpless, fascinated by the flitting, spinning mechanical ballet.

"You better recover," called Briggs weakly. "According to the altimeter, you are now eight hundred feet below the earth's surface."

Coincident with that crushing announcement the light on the instrument panel went out, leaving me in complete darkness. For no reason, an image of the hellfire-and-brimstone sign that stood for years on a familiar road at home issued up where the instrument panel had been. I opened and closed my eyes. It was pitch-black, but the image of that sign stayed and grew brighter and larger until the red-painted message filled the entire cockpit:

THE WORLD IS COMING TO AN END.
ARE YOU READY?

The letters flowed filmily over me. I felt a giddy detachment. It didn't matter any more. The flight that was not a flight didn't matter, and the crash that was not a crash didn't matter. According to science, I was whirling eight hundred feet underground, but what the hell! If you don't understand your environment, go beyond it. I picked up the microphone and called to Briggs in a low, pulsing voice: "The world is coming to an end. Are you ready?"

"I'll be damned!" said Briggs.

"Tell Buck and Wilma," I went on.

"Buck who?" cued Briggs, coming face to face with his first albatross.

"Buck Rogers in the twenty-fifth century," I blared.

Briggs quickly snapped off the power and let me out. I started to apologize for my poor showing, but then I thought better of it. I walked off without a word. Briggs just stood and stared. What he had witnessed would never be spoken of with Lindbergh's crossing or Amelia Earhart's feats, but he was well aware it had a significance of its own.

When I got to the point where I could keep the instruments under thumb, Briggs took a deep breath and proceeded to explain the basic principles of the radio range. He was ankle-deep in the subject when he stopped, pushed his sailor cap back on his head, and said belligerently, "Somehow, I get the impression you're working against me. What's wrong with you?" he inquired in despair.

"Come on; just once more," I coaxed.

While you are locating yourself on the radio range, you're in communication with the radio tower. This conversation is carried on along highly conventional lines.

"F'rinstance," said Briggs, "after you've received my message you acknowledge it by saying 'Wilco.' That finishes everything."

"I say 'Wilco'?" I asked incredulously.

"Yeah. Used to say 'Roger,' but they changed it."

"What was the matter with 'Roger'?" I asked, failing to see quite what motivated the revolution.

"I don't know. Just one of them things," said Briggs, accustomed to impermanence. "There was a big shake-up last winter."

I was never taken behind the scene, but I imagine that when Roger went he dragged a lot of big names down with him.

The day I had my radio check I was particularly alert. Even the most complex features of the range stood out clearly in my mind. It was the insight that comes once in a lifetime. Briggs gave me an easy problem, and I sailed through.

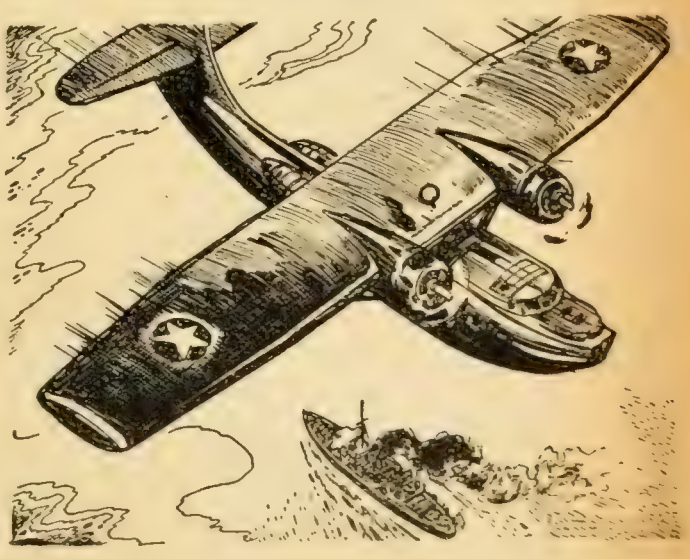
THE strange intuition that guides wild things has always filled me with wonder. I understand it better now. After eight months as a cadet you were warier than a crow. For instance, you learned unconsciously, as a quail learns to fly behind trees, that no officer would stop you if you took long, rapid strides and looked grim. You intuitively gave the impression that you were hurrying down to put your arm in the dyke or place some sort of alarm. You naturally radiated direction and purpose, and nobody deterred you. It was low, it was like a crow, but it was handy insurance.

Hardened in my newborn animal ken, I was not in the least duped by well-wishers who said the final stage of the syllabus would be easy sailing. As long as one was a cadet, he lived under the statesman's apprehension that things could get much worse before they got better.

After the lacy technique of instrument flying came specialized training. You went either to a fighter, dive bomber, patrol bomber, torpedo bomber, or observation squadron. I went into patrol bombers.

"This baby weighs nine tons, buddy. That's all—just nine tons."

The first day I arrived at the P-boat squadron, a crewman volunteered these dimensions with the pride of an elephant keeper who feels that he's responsible for the



beast's development. The wing was fourteen feet above the ground, and from one tip to the other it was one hundred and four feet.

"It won't be a fair fight," I said, overwhelmed.

"You don't wanna fight these babies," said the crewman.

"I don't wanna," I agreed. "But that's the way it always ends up."

"Take it easy," said the crewman, tapping his hand against the blue hull of the huge twin-engined Catalina. "Use your head"—he echoed the familiar battle hymn.

"Keep calm," I chorused.

Inside, the Catalina was divided into five compartments, all filled with complicated gear. A seaman was tinkering with this and fussing with that.

"Chief mechanic," explained Weaver, one of the cadets.

Cadet Baltman and Lieutenant Willson came in and went forward to the pilots' seats.

"Baltman is taking the first hour," said Weaver, slipping into a life jacket.

Two more enlisted men came in and sat down in the compartment behind the pilot. One fastened on earphones and worked at a panel of radio dials. The other straightened out his plotting equipment.

"Radioman and navigator," said Weaver.

"It's filling up nicely," I commented.

"The gunner will be along in a minute."

The gunner arrived, and brought three of his friends.

I pointed questioningly, wondering if Burton Holmes was scheduled to lecture.

"They need three hours of flying each month to collect their flight pay," explained Weaver. "We usually take a few with us."

"Oh," I nodded, humbled by the thought that before the morning passed I should be called upon to fly the auditorium myself.

"You better stand by to close the hatch," he said. "Close it when we begin to taxi out to the bay."

By means of the tractor and taut ropes the flying boat was lowered slowly down the ramp. The launching crew, all in swimming trunks and deeply tanned, bent and strained over the cables, shouting instructions and cursing each other angrily—some even swimming about in the water, unhooking the supporting wheels and keeping the boat free.

One shouted at me, "Trade places with you, Jack." In the water his brown reflected body looked disjointed.

"Not today, Mack," I called. He was pushing the season.

"Join the Navy and live like a damn fish," he blubbered, swimming back to the tail.

THE boat bobbed freely in the water now. The engines tuned up faster, vibrating the whole ship. We passed around the breakwater. The pilot headed into the wind and opened the throttle. The water scudded past only a few feet below me. As the plane gathered speed, it churned up a rich white bubbling foam. Spray flew by in a hail and sparkled in the sun. Drops collected on the hatch pane and rolled slowly down the glass like tears. There was a jar when the pilot pulled the plane up on its step, and then smoothness as the plane lifted clear and rose from the water, leaving a clean, cleaving streak on the surface below.

I went forward again. The four sailors were sleeping soundly in the bunks. The radioman was slumped over in his chair and the navigator had his head buried in his arms. Weaver was stretched out comfortably. It looked like a flying flophouse.

"Better work in some sack time," advised Weaver. "We'll be up for three hours. It gets pretty dull."

"I can't sleep now," I said nervously. You might as well tell a man who is trying to corner the grain market to take a nap in the Chicago wheat pit.

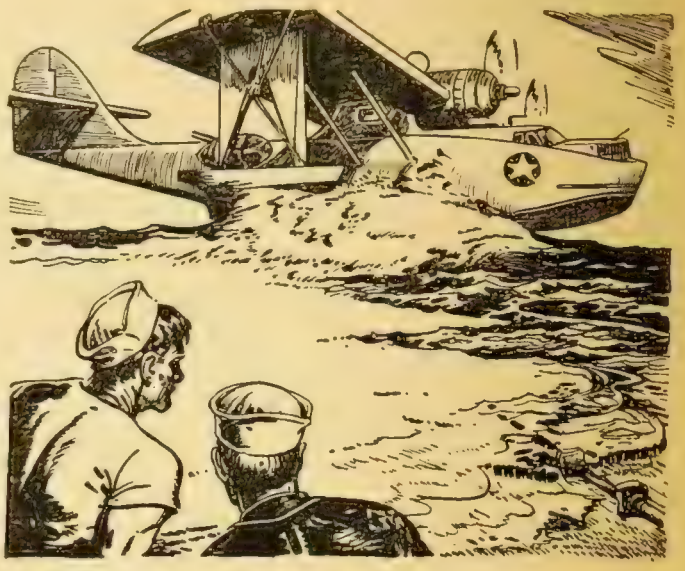
After what seemed an interminable time, Weaver said, "You're up, Dowd. Give him the old initiative."

I went forward and sat down in the second pilot's seat. Willson, the instructor, was a stocky fellow, sandy-haired, with a ruddy complexion and a tired look in his face. Without saying a word, he climbed to twelve hundred feet, motioned me to take over, and placed nine tons right in my lap

My first impulse was to haul back on the wheel for all I was worth and hold the machine up by strength alone until my arms gave out. The plane did not put up the expected struggle. On the contrary, it showed an even disposition and a positive inclination to float lazily around the bay. I circled the bay twice. After about ten minutes I looked over at the instructor, and, to my wide-eyed horror, Lieutenant Willson, U. S. N. R., was sleeping like a baby. I was solely responsible for a floating Pullman. In the after compartments the cargo of eight was dead to the world. Had any one of them realized the predicament, there would have been a shameful rush for the life-saving equipment.

"Give him the old initiative," Weaver's advice floated back.

I would have given him my shiny red scooter if he would have opened his eyes and spoken. There was a foolish, restive grin on his face. As long as the gas held



out, I could fly around in harmless circles. The only course open was to hang on until Mr. Willson succumbed to some other primal instinct. He was well fleshed. It might be days before he was hungry enough to wake up.

The next time we approached the station, I nosed the plane over gently. There was no sense in rousing everybody by a dive. When I leveled out, I had far too much speed to stay down. The plane blazed over the water with no intention of settling. I pulled the nose up and tried the maneuver once more.

Three similar passes brought the entire ground personnel out on the ramp. All other planes were warned clear of the area. The fourth time I came down to the water and began another run on the horizon, curiosity killed the radio tower.

"Prep five three from radio tower. What the hell goes on? Go ahead."

Mr. Willson snapped abruptly out of his coma. When it dawned on him that we had twelve feet instead of twelve hundred, he began to talk rapidly and excitedly to himself. He grabbed the controls and landed.

Later, as we walked back to the hangar, he turned to me.

"What are you trying to pull? First time up in a P-boat, you try to land the thing. You think you're Rickenbacker, don't cha?" His head was bobbing up and down while he talked furiously.

"No, sir," I said. I could honestly say I did not think I was Rickenbacker.

"You're crazy, aren't cha?" he thundered.

"No, sir, I'm full of initiative," I said.

The duty officer ran up.

"What happened?" he asked.

"Crazy kid tried to kill us," Mr. Willson bawled, giving his version.

GROUND school's major attraction was synthetic training. One of the hangars housed a lethal amusement palace where warfare and Coney Island blended into high, crusading entertainment. You could have a barrel of fun firing miniature machine guns at miniature planes, playing rear gunner in make-believe turrets, and dog-fighting in the imitation cockpits. The trade that otherwise flocked to the Flying Turns lined up for a chilling ride on the bomb trainer. The Navy had not yet leased soft-drink concessions, but I often felt that surprise

crackerjack with a little grenade at the bottom was closer than television.

The proprietor of this murderous fantasia was Seaman Carmen Lotte, who devoted his special attentions to a naval derivative of pin ball called Identico. Identico was a required part of the curriculum. Instead of balls running through tunnels and dropping into slots, ships and planes of the quarreling nations appeared. The zest of the thing lay in identifying the ship or plane as friend or foe, and then shooting at the quarry or letting it pass, as the case might be. If you pushed the right button, bells pealed, the enemy sank or went down in flames, and your score mounted apace. Should you mistakenly fall upon an ally, a mortifying sign rose up in red saying:

"You have just made Hitler very happy."

Almost everybody passed Identico, primarily because of Carmen's patriotic kibitzing. He was acknowledged champion of Identico, and his feelings were so violently anti-Nazi that, whenever a cadet threatened to err, Carmen would jab the right button before any damage could be done.

THE day I took the test, Carmen had just returned from a ten-day leave. To say he was off his game is to trifle with grace. I was relying heavily on him to pull me through. When his first shot was a broadside into the U. S. S. Massachusetts, I was as staggered as the battlewagon. Up went the sign:

"You have just made Hitler very happy."

Carmen paled.

"I sunk the Massachusetts!" he said, aghast. "What a stink that'll raise in Washington!"

"What a stink that'll raise on the Massachusetts," I suggested, nettled to find Carmen so obviously off form.

In the next few minutes he accounted for more than three hundred thousand tons of Allied shipping. His bag included the Pennsylvania, Nevada, Portland, an aircraft tender, and one Liberator bomber. Furthermore, he allowed the Japanese cruiser Yubari to pass by unmolested, presumably leaving it free to ravage the entire West Coast. It was the worst day our side had seen since Singapore.

What separated the men from the boys was the solo flight in a P-boat. It was an elastic requirement that only held when the squadron was flush with planes. If there was extra stock on hand, the students who had satisfactorily completed their training in the patrol bombers, and were judged competent for the undertaking, finished the course by soloing. A few weeks of this régime was enough to liquidate any surplus in materials. Then the system would have to be abolished until production provided excess again. When I passed by, they were, so to speak, dumping coffee in the Gulf once more.

Two students and a mechanic went together on these forays. The cadets were always anxious to go because the flight was the last barrier between serfdom and their commission. On the other hand, the trip held out nothing but unrewarded peril to the mechanic. He was usually dragged aboard kicking and screaming.

Mr. Willson, who regarded my development as one of his greatest triumphs, had purposely stayed away on this important day. He said he did not want to make me nervous. Ever since the first unfortunate instruction, he had handled me like a man high on a building ledge who had to be approached quietly and from the side, lest he become excited and jump. Undoubtedly he was home, sitting close to a telephone.

I was scheduled to take the test of fire with a cadet called Crandall. Waiting by the plane, I hoped for both our sakes that Crandall was a young man to whom aviation was second nature. If he toyed with model airplanes and was on an equal footing with horsepower, it would bolster the expedition immensely.

A cadet, head bowed, started for me. He was of medium height, his black hair cut very short, and he was making broad gestures. As he got closer I noticed he was talking to himself. When he came within earshot I heard him saying:

"Now, Ben, you can do it perfectly well. Don't say you can't do it. Say you can. Then you will. Everybody else does it. But if you don't, you've lived gloriously. Easy, Ben. Watch yourself. Ben. Everything is going to be all right."

There seemed to be the shadow of doubt in Ben's mind. When he got to me, he said nervously:

"You're Dowd. I'm Crandall. I see we're to do this awful thing together." Then he ducked his head and began to egg himself on again. "What's awful about it, Ben? It's glamorous. Think of it that way. Besides, you wouldn't ever know what hit you. Shut up, Ben—shut up!"

It was a thrilling exhibition of what a high-strung boy would do for his country, but it augured an hour of anguish for the co-pilot.

"Don't mind me," he said, looking at me again. "I drive myself this way."

"Does it do any good?" I asked, always on the alert for any black magic. He had already climbed into the plane, mumbling to himself. This steady flow of interself-communication made it plain that I was riding with two Crandalls. There was Ben, the calm, imperturbable Crandall, who rode into the jaws of death two jumps ahead of the Light Brigade. And there was Ben, the jittery Crandall, who saw disaster lurking everywhere.

Just before we slid down the ramp, the mechanic stuck his head into the compartment, put a bare hairy arm around each of us, and said:

"Listen, Post and Gatty, the object o' this trip is to get back safe, get me? I don't know how you figure to do it, and I don't care, get me? But I got a wife and two kids, and I want to see them sweet faces at the table tonight, get me?"

Having delivered his memorable piece, he went back to his station, little knowing he had tossed about three quarts of morale overboard.

"Forget him, Ben. You're sure. You're an aviator. You're a pioneer," muttered Ben, the reckless Crandall, climbing back out of a well of despair.

As the plane sped over the water, calamity closed in on Ben from all sides. He fought it back, and then he retreated. He almost capitulated, and then he stumbled uncertainly to victory.

"It won't fly. Something's wrong, Ben. There. Oh, there. No. Yes. Watch it, Ben. Watch it carefully."

I writhed beside him until we reached two hundred feet. It was like watching Hercules struggle in the hall with Death. It seemed to me that Alcestis was sinking fast.

We flew over the practice area, and went through spirals and half spirals and power landings. Each maneuver was lyrically high-lighted by the two Crandalls. Pretty soon my own nerves were raw. I began to talk to myself. We worked in chorus for the rest of the period.

The flight proved nothing aeronautically, but it established beyond doubt the power of prayer. A landing successfully consummated with the floats up was enough evidence to me. The plane must have been charged with supernatural influence. Ben began to feel this, too. It came to him that he could do no wrong.

"Hallelujah, brother!" he cried happily, landing thirty degrees out of the wind.

"Take me home," croaked the mechanic. A wife and two children gave him a greater stake in life.

Back at the base, Ben overflowed with joy.

"It's all over, Ben! You're finished. You've got your wings."

He hurried out. When he got off the plane, a group of laughing crewmen laid hands on him and heaved him off the ramp into the water. It did not seem unnatural to me. Some one should have held him under. Then another group merrily grabbed me. I started to resist and strike out to the oppressors.

"Cut it out, Mack," grieved one of the sailors. "It's traditional. When a cadet finishes, we throw him in the bay."

"Oh," I said, giving myself up, and four of them sent me sailing over the ramp.

THE brief period before graduation is certain to remain a warm nautical memory. It was a golden era that marked the high-water point of my human naval relations. Good will, like Jason's seeds, sprang up on all sides. Men of rank, who formerly passed in a trance, now

stopped with their best wishes, and sometimes even discussed the superiority of our airplanes. For three days I felt like California being taken into the Union again.

There was a batch of excited mail from home. Uncle Ted spoke for them all when he wrote:

"I've always contended that what you needed was discipline. We are all elated by your commission and feel sure that it has done you a world of good. V for victory, Uncle Ted."

I never saw Uncle Ted in my life. He moved to Manitoba before my bones formed, convinced even then that nothing could save me but regimentation.

Graduation was a simple, breathless affair. There was no time for elaborate Arthurian rites. I thought of keeping a candlelit vigil until dawn, but the chapel was locked. It was just as well. It might have been disastrous to preface my commissioned days by playing Camelot. You can explain almost anything when you are a cadet, but the Navy isn't ready yet for brand-new ensigns who carry on like Sir Gawain.

After breakfast on a fine April morning, we marched in military fashion to the Administration Building. There the Admiral gave a short address, finishing with, "Officers dismissed."

I was knighted before I knew it.

Back in the room, I packed and got ready to leave. Red Run entered.

"Good day, Ensign Dowd." He solemnly extended his hand.

"Good day, Ensign Run." We shook hands. "A very good day to you."

We walked together out of the barracks and up to the bus stand. On the way a cadet approached. When he came within five paces, he did a strange thing. He snapped his right hand, thumb beside the palm, over his right eye, keeping his forearm stiff and the lower arm at a right angle to his shoulder. As he passed, he snapped it smartly downward. It seemed to me a curious and unfortunate nervous affliction. Red stopped still in his tracks.

"We've been saluted," he said slowly. "For the first time."

It was too late to do anything about it. I wanted to run back and get his autograph, but it never would have done for an officer. We watched the unknown back shuffle wearily off to his battalion.

"Poor guy," said Red, brushing some dust from his golden wings. "What he's got ahead of him!"

"Probably do him a world of good," I said, and we started again for the bus.

THE END

BOOKS IN REVIEW

By E. A. PILLER

IF you'd like to know more about the kind of life you are going to lead in the Air Age, which you've been reading about and getting just a peek at in the advertising, editorial, and news columns recently, **Burnet Hershey** has written a book for you.

It is called **Air Future: A Primer of Aeropolitics,** a title which is likely to scare a lot of people who could have some fun with it. For, in the main, this book will tell you whether you are likely, after the war, to fly your own helicopter or autogyro, or whether it will be a convertiplane, or a combination auto-airplane with folding wings. It will tell you about the flights you will take half across the world, and how your life will

Burnet Hershey

be changed by plane freight deliveries as well.

Of course you will also read a few ominous warnings. Mr. Hershey is even now looking toward what aviation may do in World War III. We'd better be prepared, he cautions, with air bases girdling our shores and with far-flung air patrols.

But, on the whole, there is more to cheer about than fear. American aviation plus American enterprise is pretty sure to carry us far and happily into the future.

FOR sheer fun and pleasant reading there is another book of entertaining stories of the Chinese and Chinese-Americans, by

Carl Glick

Carl Glick, who wrote Shake Hands with the Dragon. His latest is **Three Times I Bow,** which, as you know, is an old polite Chinese custom.

The stories in this book are woven around Kung, formerly reporter for a Chinese newspaper in New York, now Private Kung in the Army of the United States, a man who could score 140 on an IQ test and who knew enough never to be too smart. He has a wonderful Chinese sense of humor, a civilized regard for the world and the people in it, and a knack for making events, people, and often American customs amusing.

Mr. Glick's reports on Kung's accounts of these range from an explanation of the habits of Chinese newspapers (which are customarily a day late with the news) to a description of one day when Kung reverted to Chinese living, old style, and nearly wrecked his household, usually so efficiently run by Bernice, his Chinese-American wife. There are also reports from Kung about his adaptation to Army life.

In the Army, too, Kung took the Chinese philosophic approach to problems, and, while it was unorthodox, he nevertheless advanced from buck private to lieutenant before the book's close.

FOR another round of enjoyable reading I recommend **A Man of Malice Landing,** by **Dorothy James Roberts.** It is a well told, completely satisfying novel about Marius Robinson, who wanted to know more about himself and the world before he settled down to live in it.

Orphaned young, Marius was brought up by his uncle until he left high school to discover more about the world. Among other things he discovered that he could make his way in it, that he could glitter in the business world, and that women liked him.

But that wasn't enough. Not until he returned to Malice Landing to nurse his uncle, and overcame the prejudice, the narrow thinking and provincial ways of the town, was Marius really ready for the world—and for love—because by then he understood both.

INSIDE STORY

Continued from Page 19

cinematic campfire, mournfully demanding to be buried on the lone prairie. . . . But one of the B scripts had called for a love ditty besprinkled with sunsets, stars, mountains, and lost sweethearts. Two-Gun sang this to the guitar and the fan mail went crazy.

His voice improved under tuition, and when he became an A star, it was famous on records and over the air. It had a bedroom quality. To be sure, the bedroom was usually under the wide and starry sky and the bed itself a scattering of sage on the hard, hard ground, but many a girl who hitherto had demanded box springs began to think of the joys of camping out. All this was before Mr. Hemingway made sleeping bags popular.

In A pictures Two-Gun still rode his faithful Buddy, but was usually the strong silent young man from beyond the Great Divide who invaded New York, laughed at by more sophisticated wights, scorned by the beautiful society girl of his dreams. In the end, the wights were humbled, the girl succumbed, and off rode Two-Gun and the heroine, singing, into the sunset. Little by little his writers learned to slice it in more unusual patterns, and little by little Two-Gun learned to act.

By now practically the entire world knew that Two-Gun had been born Jonathan P. Wesley, that he was reared in Texas by relatives, after the untimely demise of his parents, and then, orphaned a second time by the death of his foster folks, he had seen the sheriff at the door. Hal Bistro, the director, had discovered him singing in a radio station and pining away for the smell of the sage and the feel of a horse beneath him.

MARTY grew up. She made her debut at seventeen at a small party, because Melanie knew that only the socially secure may be ostentatious and get away with it. But there wasn't a debutante in town who could match Marty. Her skin was white as a fresh gardenia, smooth as Jersey cream, and soft as uncrushable velvet. The black hair shone with its own blue luster, and her lashes were fabulous. She had a curving mouth of flexible red satin, and her gray eyes were like a storm with the sun behind it. She wore size twelve dresses, and had the loveliest legs in the world.

All this, and pa's money too, brought her many proposals—early refugee titles, early American aristocracy, early Standard Oil and steel bank accounts. But Marty said No. She said it affectionately, even reluctantly, but she said it. So the unhappy suitors went away and married a lot of other girls and never forgot her. They wept about her when they were tight and spoke her name at inopportune moments.

Marty's parents were, to coin a

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phrase, flabbergasted. They didn't give a really vital whoop for titles, pedigrees, and money. They were doing all right. But they loved their child and wanted to see her married, surrounded by rosy babies, adoration, and a good domestic staff. It was the normal life. Ulysses took to bringing home intelligent young clerks from the office. But again, sweetly, pityingly, Marty said No.

Then she was nineteen, and on her birthday her father gave her a substantial string of pearls and a hunk of stock and said thoughtfully, "Good investment, sweetheart. Looks like we'd be in this war up to our necks pretty soon."

Marty nodded, sitting at the parental knee before a blazing fireplace in the recently acquired Adirondack camp. They'd gone up there for her birthday. The Smiths wanted her to have a party, but Marty said No, she'd rather be alone with the family.

Her poor godmother was present. Her name was Jane Wilmer. She was tall, thin, ironic, with a face like a camel's. She had retired from teaching some years ago, on an annuity left her by an aged aunt. Jane liked to travel, but travel wasn't indicated at present. A year ago Melanie had asked her to come for a visit, so she came, and stayed. She was devoted to Melanie, she loved Marty, and she often thought that if Mr. Smith had had a twin brother she could have been happy with him.

Mr. Smith continued wistfully:

"Pretty soon our boys will be in uniform. Maybe you'll fall in love with one," he said hopefully. "A colonel perhaps. How'd you like to be the colonel's lady?"

"I dare say she'd hate it," said Jane. "Let her settle for a sergeant." Jane remembered a sergeant. Back in the last war. He went to France and didn't return.

MARTY spoke up.

"I've been in love," she said, "four years."

Bombshell!

Every one talked at once, mostly calling the roll.

"No," said Marty—"with Jonathan Wesley."

"Who in hell is he?" inquired her father, jarred.

"Two-Gun Wesley," she said. "You know, dad . . ."

Jane never went to the movies unless it was a foreign picture or a Disney. She looked with inquiry at Melanie. Melanie never went to the movies unless it was Gable. She looked inquiringly at her husband, who attended twice a week for six weeks every summer on the Cape.

"That drugstore cowboy?" cried Mr. Smith in anguish. "You can't be serious."

"I'm perfectly serious," said his only child stubbornly. "And it's time I did something about it. You know people in Hollywood, father."

All her life she had said, without greediness, but with calm confidence, Buy me this, buy me that.

"Sure," acknowledged poor pop, "slews of 'em. But—"

She said, "I'm going out there. I'm not going to spend the rest of my life writing scenarios in my mind. I'm going to meet Jonny, marry him."

"Good Lord!" interrupted Smith devoutly. Melanie, for once, was speechless. She had refused to permit Marty to run with the table hoppers. She knew that her child could have reigned as Glamour Girl Number One for a brief season had she allowed it. But she didn't. She permitted her only the routine dignified appearances on proper junior committees, with the result that the columnists spoke of Martha's beautiful breeding, her detestation of limelight, and added regretfully that if her parents' high principles had permitted her a season of café society she would have won hands down over all contenders.

"I WANT to go to Hollywood with trumpets," went on Marty. "I want to make a splash. I can't act for sour apples. You've seen me in the school plays. But with the right publicity I might get a contract, and if I did, I'd be asked to parties—on the fringe of course, just a cut above the waiters, and there's a chance that Jonny will be at one of them. That's all I want."

She set her jaw, and her mother realized that despite an assortment of features and chassis design in no way resembling either parent, Marty partook of the characteristics of both. For Smith was a stubborn man and Melanie a stubborn woman and each in his own way fiercely ambitious.

Marty rose. She said, smiling, "Think it over. I've saved most of my allowance. But it won't be enough to do it properly."

She disappeared, whistling a snatch of Two-Gun's most recent ballad, Into the Sunset with You, Dear Heart, and her stricken parents looked at each other and then at Jane. For years they had turned to Jane for advice; and since her residence in the Smith household, she had become a combination of Emily Post, The Family Doctor Book, and What to Do Until Adler, Freud, and Jung Arrive.

"Let her," Jane advised promptly. "She'll meet him, of course. He'll turn out to be exactly what you'd expect. Marty's no fool. She'll come back and marry some one suitable—that nice Homer Bedlington for instance, or Rusty Corbin. But if she isn't subjected to her personal, convincing disillusionment first, she'll never be happy."

"But," wailed Melanie, "she can't go alone, and I can't possibly go with her, Jane. I'm up to my neck in—"

"I know," said Jane hastily. "Spare me the inventory. I'll go. And we'll do it right. It will take money, letters of introduction, and a quiet swank. This has to be purple and fine linen, not mink and slacks. Leave it to me. It will be no sacrifice," she assured them. "I've always wanted to see Hollywood."

She had. For years Jane had secretly yearned to be inside Hollywood. She read the fan magazines with avidity, if in privacy. She pictured the place as a species of Atlantis, with settings by Oenslager, properties by Dali, cast by delirium tremens, incidental music by Ravel, with a Duke Ellington arrangement, and lyrics by Coleridge in one of his more narcotized moments.

JANE, Marty, a personal maid, and two French poodles erupted upon Beverly Hills in the autumn of '41. Mr. Smith's West Coast office had arranged for a house, a neat little number, tastefully furnished by—it would seem from the rental—Paul Flato. There were six master bedrooms, each with dressing room and bath. The swimming-pool cabaña had a game room and bar. The guest cottage was pure Marie Antoinette. There was an adequate staff of domestic servants.

Jane was delighted with the setup, as it perfectly realized her ideas, but she was reluctantly forced to revise them when she discovered that—except for isolated people, episodes, and circumstances—Hollywood was hard-working, sober, and went early to bed.

Which greatly disappointed her.

However, her personal reactions were of no moment. She had to concentrate on getting Marty her expensive disillusionment.

Armed with her letters, Marty met a few of the right people, who in turn presented her to others. It took some time before she met Jonathan. She saw him, of course, at a distance, at previews, concerts, polo games, or whatever, and once lunched not far away. She observed that he looked at her thoughtfully several times and then beckoned the headwaiter and asked a question. Marty flushed and pinched Jane's knee until that lady hissed, "If you don't stop I'll stab you with a fork. Yes, of course I see him, but where's his horse?"

To Jane, the hero looked like any other personable young man. He wasn't very tall, but he was well enough built. He had a pleasant arrangement of features and the routine tan. When he left the room, Jane observed that whatever else was synthetic about him, his bowlegs were genuine.

It was curious that Marty's first meeting with Two-Gun coincided with her encounter with Orlando Manifest, whose name is no more remarkable than a lot one sees on screen credits, and who was the demon director of the era credited with discovering more stars than all the astronomers put together.

This was at the very British War Relief party at the house of Sir Secundus Utter, the character actor. Marty was standing at the edge of the pool—it was far too cold to swim, but half a dozen extras and bit players with shapely underpinnings were posing around the edge for cheesecake art—when she saw Two-Gun

The Smile That Hid an Aching Heart

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JANE watched her handsome husband, in his lieutenant's uniform, disappear through the gates of Track 7. Her brave smile vanished as the ache in her heart became unbearable.

Saying goodbye to Tom always meant a heartache, but this time the pain was far greater. Something had spoiled their precious reunion . . . something she couldn't understand. He seemed almost glad to be leaving her . . . he was so aloof and silent . . .

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arrive. Naturally he was in full regalia, as it was considered indecent by his publicity department for him to appear in public without chaps, sombrero, silver-studded belt, high heels, and astonishing shirt. Marty was talking, as it happened, to Manifest, and he, following the direction of her regard, waved and yelled, "Hi, Jonny!" and Jonny, beaming happily, made his way toward them.

Jane saw it happen, as she was, as usual, not far away. She saw Marty flush, then turn pale. She saw her take a step backward, which was in the wrong direction. Thus Marty made her splash. It was unfortunate, but Jane wasn't particularly disturbed; if any one could swim, it was Marty.

Jonny didn't know that. In he went, chaps and all, forgetting that he couldn't. Marty dragged him out.

If you remember the story you'll recall that it read, "Two-Gun Wesley rescues New York socialite."

There was considerable confusion, but eventually every one was resuscitated, including Manifest, who, in the excitement, had fallen in too. Their host, undaunted, provided dry clothing for the impetuous guests, and after the cameramen had come and gone, the party went on.

Hours later Jonny and Marty were sitting side by side under a couple of patio palms. Manifest, looking remarkable in Sir Secundus' second-best and therefore less shabby tweeds, was talking to Jane. He said thoughtfully, "Is that girl really Ulysses Smith's daughter?"

"Yes," said Jane. "Want to make something of it?"

Manifest regarded Jane's camel countenance with amusement. He asked, "Did she come out to get into pictures?"

"No," said Jane; "it isn't necessary —now."

"She's very pretty," said Orlando thoughtfully. "Not that that makes any difference. Of course she'd have considerable publicity." He shrugged. "Not that that matters, either, in the long run, in this business."

He strolled over to Marty. He inquired, looking at her, "Have you considered a picture career?"

"Nope," said Marty, turning her back on him and looking into Jonny's very blue eyes. Jonny beamed. He asked boyishly, "Isn't she plumb wonderful?"

A FEW days later Manifest saw the prints of the swimming-pool picture, which had been widely released and had elicited astonished telephone calls from the Smiths. He didn't look twice at Jonny. He knew what he looked like; but he looked at Marty, whistling.

She was adamant. She was having a divine time, watching Jonny on the set, dining and dancing with him, attending this shindig and that. She wasn't interested in a screen test and said so.

Manifest enlisted Jane. He said firmly, "Look here. This is nonsense."

Jane thought it over. Privately she was getting worried, for Marty had Jonny all but hog-tied. Jonny was in the strong silent stage. Any moment now he would break down and say, "Gal, yo're as purty as a mountain sunrise." Jane, chaperoning with fortitude, had more than once heard him remark that the reason he'd never married was because he came into contact with only movie-struck girls or girls already in pictures. They were not for him. He wanted his little woman in the home, where she belonged. One career was enough in a family.

It looked as if Marty's parents and godmother had met defeat. It looked as if Marty, far from being disillu-

PORTRAIT OF A SPINSTER

She had a vague distrust of men
Her wondering whole life long...
And never would she yield to the yen
To see if she was wrong.

—S. H. DEWHURST.

sioned, was illusioned to the point of a two-gun wedding.

So Jane persuaded Marty. It would be such fun, she said. It probably wouldn't amount to anything. It rarely did. Look at the contest winners! But she, Jane, was getting so tired of Manifest's importunities that if Marty didn't take the test and shut him up, she'd go home. And, if she went, Marty would go too. The Smiths would never permit their child to rattle around unchaperoned in the Queen Anne-Tudor-Connecticut farmhouse in Beverly Hills.

Marty gave in, for Jonny hadn't proposed. He took his time. He must have been used to the wide-open spaces, for he was uneasy in secluded corners. But give her a few more weeks, she thought, and the Smiths could come on for the wedding and, aside from Buddy, the ineffable horse, she would be free of chaperonage forever.

She took the test, and Jane was present, shuddering to her fastidious soul. Marty reading a letter from her dead lover was excruciating; Marty defying her parents; Marty weeping over her fatherless child; Marty doing a bit of high comedy was agonizing.

Jonny thought so too, and he was happy as a clam. He had insisted on donating his silver-studded time to the test.

But in the love scenes he was very convincing, and Marty wasn't bad either.

"Holy Moses," said Jane to Manifest, "if I ever saw incomparably dreadful acting—except in the clinches," she added. She liked Manifest, "And that isn't acting."

But Manifest said abstractedly,

"Well, with good direction—provided she photographs—"

She photographed. Pretty girls aren't always photogenic, and photogenic girls aren't always pretty. Marty was both. And the camera's eye saw her as beautiful and bewildering, all any studio needs, rolled into one. She was exotic to the point of causing an audience to yell Uncle; sarong or sweater, she was in there pitching. And in addition, she achieved fragility, wistfulness, and a touch of the wholesome home girl. The jitterbugs might stamp in the aisles, but the old gent of fifty in the audience would be reminded of the first girl he had ever loved, and of stolen kisses beside a long faded lilac bush.

It was murder.

"What the hell!" cried Manifest, as he and Jane witnessed the test. "What if she can't act? She doesn't have to! With direction—oh, boy!"

Marty was offered a contract. She declined. They raised the ante. She redeclined.

Said Jane cunningly, "So you're waiting for Jonny to propose."

Marty was an honest girl. "I've done everything," she replied. "That is," she added, "almost."

"You've thrown yourself at him," said Jane. "Accept the contract, and let him worry for a while—pay some attention to the other men who hang around this house like well dressed termites. That will bring him to time," Jane prophesied.

Marty signed. She quarreled with Jonny. Jonny went off to his ranch and talked to his horse. Marty went into pictures.

She was doing it for Jonny of course, but little by little she fell for it. She had a very small part and about six lines, but plenty of close-ups. She worked like a little beaver and wore Jane to a frazzle. She began to talk about her art. And the publicity releases were stupendous.

THIS lovely girl, said they, in effect, born with a platinum flea in her ear, started from scratch, with no wish to trade upon her position and great wealth. She would not even use her own socially registered name. So there was a hundred bucks waiting for the mental giant who would give out with the most suitable moniker for this wonder girl, the greatest find since Garbo, Lamarr, and Lana Turner.

So Martha Henrietta Smith died and Vickie Vaughan was born.

Jonny, after a session with Jane, proposed. He was accepted, the condition being that Marty be permitted to follow her cinematic star. She owed it to herself.

He unproposed.

Marty, with a broken heart, finished her picture and went to view the results, which were wonderful, as Manifest hadn't given her anything to do. She had but to open her mouth and announce that she had just played four sets of tennis, or that Lester Wainright was in the garden. Thanks to Manifest, all she had to do was to exist, which was more than enough. When the picture was released, the critics fell into the swimming pool too, and none of them could swim.

As she didn't act, they couldn't criticize her acting. So they looked at her and said in various ways that here was the most promising girl to reach the screen in twenty years. What she seemed to promise they didn't divulge, as each had his own private dream, according to the sort of man he was.

As overnight Marty Smith became Vickie Vaughan, so, overnight, Vickie Vaughan became an untried Duse.

She believed it, and Jane found herself chaperoning a Star.

It was terrible.

So was the second picture. Her studio rushed her into that, and gave her a part with teeth. This happened because Manifest's contract expired and he went over to Mammoth Movies at a much bigger salary. Manifest would have managed Marty, but the new director gave her something to do. A lot.

She was still beautiful and, to coin another phrase, lousy.

After the sneak preview she went home and cried herself into a tizzy. Jane administered spirits of ammonia and a bromide. Then she went downstairs and telephoned Jonny.

Jonny came around. His contract had also expired, but Mr. Whiskers held his option. This was in the spring of '41, and Jonny was going to have a crack at the Axis. He had sworn his studio to secrecy. "It isn't the sort of thing," he told Jane, "that you ought to trade on."

Jonny was a good kid. He had been born in Brooklyn and moved to Texas for his father's health. He'd never had an intimate contact with a horse until a bored and traveling talent scout, tuning in a small station by mistake, had heard him sing cowboy songs with a bunch of lads from the Bronx, Hoboken, and Westport, Connecticut. His bowlegs were the result of a slight touch of rickets in childhood.

ALL this he told Jane, who listened, resigned to the inevitable. He said, "I don't like Hollywood, Jane. It scares the chaps right off me. I'm scared of the girls here too. They know all the answers. Of course I've never had a chance to ask them any questions," he admitted, "as it's in my contract that I can't do real love scenes and mustn't be seen in public with any of the five-alarm fires. The kids wouldn't like it. I can't drink in public either," said Jonny, "nor smoke. That's the way it is. And if I married a star—or a girl who wanted to be a star—"

"You're marrying a flop," said Jane—"that is, I hope you are. So go on upstairs, and more power to you, pardner."

For by now Jane was very fond of Jonny.

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She watched him go upstairs and then phoned Manifest. She said, "Did you see Marty's preview? O. K., O. K., I know—Orlando, they'll take the phone out. Come around and have a highball. I want you in at the finish."

Upstairs, Marty was weeping in Jonny's arms. She said, "I've been such a fool."

And Jonny was saying, "Gee, Marty, I'm nuts about you."

There wasn't a gal or a purty left in him.

That's the story. Marty's back in New York now, telling it to the marines by V-mail. She's Mrs. Jonathan Wesley, and lives with her family, waiting for Jonny to come home. After he does, he isn't returning to pictures; he's going to work for his father-in-law. And every one's forgotten Vickie Vaughan, including Marty.

Except Jane. Vickie was her passport to a wonderful time. Because, while drinking that highball and waiting for Jonny to come tumbling downstairs with glad tidings of practically immediate nuptials, Orlando Manifest set down his glass soberly and stared at Jane. He said:

"You have a very remarkable face."

"You're telling me," said Jane sourly.

"It is perfect," said Manifest, "for the part."

"What part?" asked Jane.

"Any part; acidulous but golden-hearted spinster, goddess from the machine, sharp-tongued dowager duchess, maiden aunt turned detective. There are a million parts. And you've a marvelous voice, Jane. There's a bit in the picture I'm casting now. How'd you like a test?"

She'd like it. She was crazy about Hollywood. She'd had more fun there than ever before in her sixty years.

YOU'VE seen her on the screen. She got her contract and she made an instantaneous hit. She bought the house she and Marty had rented. She lives there now. She's in every fan magazine you pick up. The boys at camp love her. When she guest-stars on the radio there's a rush to the dials.

She doesn't have to be beautiful, she doesn't have to act; she has merely to be herself and she lays 'em in the aisles. That's the inside story.

How do I know?

Well, Marty wrote me and said that as I had been her godmother for twenty years, I could be Jonny, Jr.'s, godmother too. I couldn't get East for the christening because I was in the middle of a picture, but I sent my secretary out to see if we could get a priority on a platinum mug and porringer.

All because Marty Smith went to a movie house on Cape Cod and saw Two-Gun Wesley hanging over a cliff.

Amusing, isn't it?

THE END

INDUSTRY'S CINDERELLA

Continued from Page 17

dealers. These few firms do most of the scrap business, deal directly with the seven companies that produce about 75 per cent of our steel.

Trading in scrap is no vocation for the phlegmatic. Price variations are wide and the market fluctuates in accordance with Steel's needs and guesses. Yet the industry holds such fascination that whole families stay in it. Some of today's scrap kings are sons, nephews, or grandsons of nineteenth-century junkies. Others have themselves passed from peddler's wagon to junk shop to small yard to big yard to brokerage. Father, three sons, and a sister are all partners in one medium-sized yard. One son is trained as a lawyer, one as a bacteriologist, one as a pharmacologist, yet all have succumbed to the fascination of the scrap gamble. When I visited, the bacteriologist was operating a crane. Labor is hard to get these days.

THE industry came in for more than its share of criticism for shipping scrap to Japan. At any time during the scrap-to-Japan hullabaloo, however, the government could have clamped down. The scrap industry was no lone goat among sheep: oil, finished steel, cotton, and airplane parts were exported, too. Why the strongest stench, the loudest noise, attached itself to scrap is a matter for conjecture. The obvious visibility of scrap is perhaps one reason. At a West Coast port, for instance, a preacher stood on a pile of scrap and declaimed against its export, while a few hundred yards away gasoline destined for Japan was being loaded through hose, with nobody the wiser.

Today the picture is different and the scrap industry is earning more favorable public opinion. "The service performed by the secondary metal industry in collecting the metal objects discarded by the population and returning them to use is perhaps the most real contribution to conservation actually being accomplished today," says James S. Earle, of the U. S. Bureau of Mines. Steel lauds its poor relation in full-page ads. Our scrap situation in July was healthier than it has been at any time since Pearl Harbor. Clearly, the industry is doing its war job well.

Half a dozen government agencies, sometimes co-operating, sometimes wrangling, are mixing into scrap. The OPA sets price ceilings. WPB's Salvage Division exercises itself over supply. And under its directive the OEW imports scrap, and the Metals Reserve Corporation pays for it. The Army and the Navy both have salvage set-ups, and ambitious plans are afoot for utilizing "battlefield scrap." Industry's Cinderella no longer sits unnoticed or despised.

THE END

and there wasn't. Will Jaspers had come into camp in mid-morning, changed clothes in a fever of haste. "He went out the back way an' down the track," Lily finished.

Rack said, "What started this?"

"A fight we had," Lily said. "Then, this morning, he got an idea of some kind. I tried to find out what he was up to, but he wouldn't tell me anything, except that he was going to get a lot of money."

Rack Tinker's expression did not change. His eyes were a little bleaker perhaps, but that was all. "I saw this coming, Lily. He stayed here long enough to be sure he'd get nothing but wages from me. He's a sharpshooter, Lily. He wants money. Sooner or later he was bound to see the way he could get it."

"Horton!" Lily whispered.

"Check," said Rack. "Sam Horton."

He climbed aboard the speeder. He pressed the starter button; the engine caught, "If he's pulled out, the crew's short a man. I'd better get up there and give them a hand." He paused, looking at her thoughtfully. "What's to become of you, Lily?"

"I—I don't know."

"Addie could use help in the cookhouse."

She said, "I might do that." She shook her head impatiently. "But that doesn't matter. You're the one—"

Gently Rack said, "I'll take care of me."

AS the speeder rattled along the track, Rack felt an odd sense of relief. The days of waiting were over and done; the end was clearly in sight. This, he told himself, is the last go-round.

White Hope whistled from the top of the spar tree. Rack looked up. The Indian made a motion with his hands that described a woman's curves and pointed down the trail. Rack turned and found the trail empty. The woman had yet to come around the last bend. Rack looked up at White Hope. Questioningly he drew his finger across his throat. White Hope bobbed his head. The woman, then, was Sara Bishop.

So now it comes, Rack thought.

First Will Jaspers, and now Sara Bishop. Things were really falling apart.

White Hope came down the tree, his hooks ripping loose a shower of bark each time he slowed his fall. He talked to Stump, and the two crossed to the far side of the clearing. They met Big Red there and spoke to him. Big Red looked across at Rack, and then all three vanished into the brush. Rack allowed himself a bitter grin—the stockholders were going to be a lot of help.

A cool voice said, "Hello, Mr. Tinker."

Rack turned. "Hi, pup. I was afraid you weren't coming."

"I'll bet you were," she said.

She wore the ski outfit. The exertion of the trail had brought soft color to her cheeks. Her coat was open and her blouse showed crisp and white against her throat. She took off her cap and shook her red hair away from her neck. Very trim, Rack admitted. And from the look of her, very determined.

"So it's pay day," he said.

"Or is it the pay-off?" Sara asked.

Rack gave her a wry grin. "Right in there with the old knife, aren't you?"

"Please." Sara Bishop's voice turned businesslike. "I'd love to have a long talk with you—and some day we shall. But not today. This is not a social call, Mr. Tinker. The stumpage payment is due. If you have the money, I'll be happy to take it now. If not, we'll consider the contract broken."

"You rehearsed that speech coming up," he said.

"To be quite frank," she said, "I've been rehearsing that speech for over a month. And with a certain pleasure, I might add."

"That I can believe," Rack said.

His lean brown face was sober. He said nothing for a long moment, and Sara Bishop became impatient.

"Well?" she said tartly.

"Would you consider giving me a couple of days' grace?"

"Certainly not!"

Rack scratched the bark from a root with his calks, his eyes speculative. "We're not the only ones concerned in this, Miss Bishop," he said. "Big Red, Addie, Clyde Prio, and the rest are in it too. Would you break them, just because you don't like the cut of my face?"

Sharply Sara said, "You keep trying to make this a personal thing. It's not. It's business. And besides,

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

A restaurant was repeatedly broken into and robbed. The thieves couldn't risk a lot of noise by breaking open the cash register, so they always stole it. After this happened a few times, the owner got tired of buying cash registers, so left the cash drawer of his last one hanging open in full sight of the front window. The robberies stopped.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Mr. Horton has promised them all jobs—I've seen to that."

"Bless your heart," Rack said.

Sara Bishop held back a biting retort. Rack was quiet and thoughtful again. Then: "How about an appeal to your patriotic side?" he said. "Uncle needs the spruce. It would take Horton some time to get going—" He broke it off as anger pulled at Sara's mouth. "Ah!" he said. "Don't say it. I can see you haven't a patriotic bone in your body."

Sara Bishop's mouth was thin and white. "Are you quite through, Mr. Tinker?"

Rack grinned. "A snake's tail always twitches until sundown, pup."

"The sun is already down," she said.

"So it is," Rack said. "Be dark soon."

Sara Bishop drew a deep shaking breath. "Will you stop stalling while there is still light enough to find my way out?"

"Sorry." Rack took his billfold from his pocket, and from the billfold a check. He handed it to her. "I believe that's the right amount."

She didn't take the check. Her eyes were wide and unbelieving, her lips parted. In a moment a flush swept up from her throat and into her cheeks; her eyes snapped with a sudden and complete fury.

"You—you wouldn't!"

"Why not?" he asked. "A check is an accepted way of doing business, isn't it?"

"But you haven't the money!"

"You're jumping at conclusions," Rack told her dryly. "You can't say that check is bad until you've taken it to the bank. Of course it's too late today, but tomorrow will do as well."

"And that gives you another day!"

Rack grinned. "Why, so it does!"

"This's a cheap trick!" she cried. "And you're cheap!"

Abruptly she turned away.

HURRYING down the trail through the falling dusk, she said, "Damn him! Damn him!" again and again. His worthless check and his patronizing attitude. But it was the same every time—Mr. Big and the impulsive child. "There now, pup. Let's don't get personal."

"The big tramp!" she said aloud.

She stumbled. With the deepening shadows and her angry tears, the trail was becoming very hard to see. The trail ran gently down toward Broken River. It followed the narrow gully bottoms, turning out of this one and into that. The trees grew close, sometimes interlocking above her head, and these places were quite dark. Even the clearings were thick with shadows. But Sara Bishop was hardly aware of this. There was room in her mind for but a single thought: If only she could have Rack's neck under her foot. Just once. So that she could stamp and stamp until she was utterly and completely tired.

Suddenly she stopped.

She'd been walking, she realized, much longer than it should have taken to reach the river. She turned and went back to the end of the gully. There she found three paths, each following the bottom of a small ravine. She could see little difference between them—animals had made them all. She looked up. There were a few stars in the sky. Night was very close. The shapes of the trees, even now, were vague and indistinct. None of the trees were familiar, none of the hills. Sara sat down on a log beside the trail.

Well, chump, she told herself, you're lost!

A sound brought her head up. A man came down the trail toward her. It was Rack. She got to her feet.

"Hi, pup," he said. "Not tired, are you?"

There was an undeniable rush of relief in Sara Bishop, but she tried not to show it. "You followed me," she said accusingly.

He nodded. "That's right. It was getting pretty dark and I was afraid you'd take a wrong turn."

Icily Sara said, "So nice of you!"

Rack sat down on the log Sara had used. He made a slow methodical job of rolling a cigarette. He lighted it and in the flare of the match Sara saw a smile on his lips, an odd and merry shine in his eyes.

She cleared her throat. "Are you taking me out?"

"I'd like to," Rack said. "I'd like to get you and that check to the bank in the worst way."

"Well, why don't you?"

"I can't," he said placidly. "I'm lost too."

"You . . ." she said, "you . . ."

And for a long moment she could only look at him. It just wasn't possible. No man ever lived with brass enough to do a thing like this, and yet—Rack Tinker had it. He'd keep her lost one day, two, or whatever he needed to make the check good. She saw his grin, the amusement in his eyes, and there was no doubt whatever in her mind.

"Oh!" she whispered.

She turned away and ran. There was a quick shout from Rack, but she went on—and faster. She followed the small ravine to the left. The brush grew close to the track and tore at her as she passed. She had a vague idea that if she reached the river she could find her way out. But it wasn't important, really. Nothing was important, except that Rack was not going to do this thing to her.

He shouted, somewhere behind.

Sara went on, unheeding. The gully ended. She turned left again, into another. In a dozen yards the trail narrowed to nothing and she was confronted with a hopelessly black wall of brush. "Oh, damn! Oh, damn!" she whispered. Turning, she ran back. She found another trail. It led upward, almost certainly away from the river, but it was the only way open, unless she went back. She couldn't go back because Rack was there, and very close. She wouldn't see Rack again. Ever. She took the trail up, running hard.

A SMALL branch flicked her across the face, made her gasp with pain. She fell, farther on, stumbling clear of the trail to collapse on her hands and knees in a prison of branches. Her hair became entangled. She pulled it free with an angry jerk, not caring about the hurt. Pushing through the branches, she fell again, across the trail and into the brush on the other side. She got up, found the trail, and went on.

Presently the brush gave way to a grove of tall trees. Salal and Oregon grape spread in a waist-high tangle everywhere, covering humps and hollows alike, covering the trail. Sara went only a few yards in this before she fell again. This time a complete

"Could I interest you in that necklace, madam?"

and terrible exhaustion held her down. She lay there, almost covered by the salal. It hurt to breathe, and her heart pounded. It was a long while before she had strength enough to sit up.

Above her a faint grayness etched the tops of the trees, but on the ground it was quite dark. She got to her feet. There was no sign of Rack, no sound from him, no calling. As the moments went by, she realized she was very much alone. Alone in a world that was very big and very dark. She bit her lips angrily. At least he could call. She wouldn't answer, but he could call, and she would have the satisfaction of not answering; of hearing him blunder through the brush in frantic search; of knowing he was sweating for the things he'd done. She waited, listening. A minute went by, two, three. Still no sound. The wind made its quiet whispering. Far off, the brush cracked. An animal, she thought, a big one. More minutes went by. In vexation, she stamped her foot.

"Oh, where is he?" she said aloud.

"I'm here," he answered pleasantly from close by. "But what I want to know is where are we?"

She gasped, "Oh!" in sudden fright.

But the fright lasted only a slim moment. Fury and chagrin exploded within her. She wheeled and ran. It was hard running now. The salal held her feet like hip-deep water. She couldn't see the way ahead; she hadn't gone more than a dozen steps before she met a tree. A glancing blow sheered her away and she tripped and fell. Her shoulders caught on the brink of an incline, and she tumbled down, head over heels, to land in a tangled heap, unhurt but shaken and angry. Rack was there in a moment. He found her leg first, then her shoulders. Chuckling, he stood her on her feet.

"Slack it off, pup," he told her. "You can't slam through the dark this way."

Hoarsely she said, "Let me go!"

She fought him with everything she had. But in the end he trapped her under one long arm and held her clear of the ground until she'd fought herself to exhaustion. Then, with his free hand, he struck a match. The flare showed her face, red with scratches and a little dirty; her tangled hair; her eyes wide and hating him as no man had ever been hated before. He grinned at her.

"You're a mess," he said cheerfully.

She bared her teeth. "You're a—"

"How you talk!" he said.

He put out the match and carried her up the incline. On level ground again, he set her on her feet. This time he kept one hand on her arm.

"Let's be sensible," he said. He put his hands on her shoulders and shook her gently. "I'll build a fire. We'll talk this over like grown-ups. If we agree on a couple of things, I might remember the way out. How about it, pup?"

She didn't answer. For a long moment her shoulders were rigid and unmoving beneath his hands. Then suddenly her shoulders lifted. It was a warning. Rack pulled his hand away as her head bent sharply to the side. Her teeth only grazed his thumb. He cuffed her lightly.

"I'll muzzle you, pup," he said.

She said, "Let me go."

He held her. "Suppose I do."

"I'll find my way out."

"It might be a job."

SHE was quiet again. Her shoulders still had that unrelenting tenseness. Rack couldn't see her face, and he supposed it was just as well he couldn't. Finally he took his hands from her shoulders.

"All right," he said. "Have a go at it."

And she did. Rack grinned his amazement as she walked steadily away. A nice girl, this Sara Bishop, but she certainly got madder than anybody. It was no trouble to follow her. His long legs and calked boots gave him a big advantage. She slipped and slid and fell time and again; she got tangled in one brush heap after another, working her way out with a grim patience and many muffled expletives. Her course was generally up the hill. A long, hard haul, but she clung to it doggedly. It was a full half hour before she stopped to rest.

Rack found a place to sit. He rolled a cigarette for himself and one for her. She knocked the one he offered her into the brush. Rack put a match to his own and settled back to hear her pant.

After a moment he asked, "Want a fire?"

She didn't answer.

"Oh, well," he said.

He smoked comfortably for a few moments. Then, to help pass the time, he told her about the cougar he'd shot in the hills near by.

"A big one," he said. "Nine feet, tip to tip. It killed some sheep down near Platform Point. We never bothered about it till it started for

(*Continued on page 54*)

Through 85 Years of

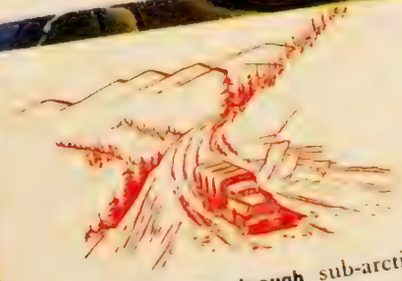
Conquering Nature

A GRAND OLD CANADIAN NAME

1861 **Cog-wheel railroad** climbed Mt. Washington, New Hampshire, to 4,700-foot altitude after six years of construction. Three years before, Corby's began its climb to fame.

1883 **Brooklyn Bridge** opened after 13 years of construction. This was the first big cable-suspended bridge and its completion coincided with Corby's 25th anniversary as a whiskey name of high reputation.

1914 **After 11 years,** the builders of the Panama Canal conquered disease, adverse climate and difficult construction to open this two-ocean waterway; during Corby's 56th year of whiskey fame.



1942 **Punching through** sub-arctic forests and mountains in six months, the builders of the Alcan Highway completed the first link of America's road to Tokio in 1942; Corby's 84th year of whiskey fame.

Now I'm on every Corby's bottle asking you to BUY WAR BONDS

PRODUCED IN U. S. A. under the direct supervision of our expert Canadian blender.

Distilleries now produce alcohol for war chemicals to he conquer our enemies. Limited Corby's supplies are bei distributed as often as possible. Buy a "sample" pint of th light, sociable whiskey with the grand old Canadian nan . . . when it's in stock. We'll let Corby's do its own co vincing. *An occasional "sampling" of Corby's now may gr to lasting preference after victory!*

86 PROOF — 68.4% GRAIN NEUTRAL SPIRITS — JAS. BARCLAY & CO., LIMITED, PEORIA, ILLIN

NEEDS NO AFTER RINSE
EFFECTIVE IN THE HARDEST WATER
GOOD FOR BLONDES, RED HEADS AND BRUNETTES
REMOVES DANDRUFF WITH FIRST APPLICATION
RECONDITIONS HAIR AND SCALP
LEAVES HAIR ANTISEPTICALLY CLEAN

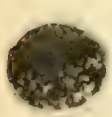
"GOODBYE DANDRUFF"

DON'T let dandruff spoil your appearance! Keep your hair shining with natural life and color, and COMPLETELY FREE OF DANDRUFF, by using Fitch Shampoo regularly each week. Fitch Shampoo is the only shampoo made whose guarantee to remove dandruff with the first application bears the backing of one of the world's largest insurance firms.

RESULTS ARE DIFFERENT—BECAUSE FITCH SHAMPOO IS DIFFERENT

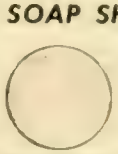
And you APPLY it differently, too—directly to the DRY hair, and scalp. That's when it penetrates and cleanses the thousands of tiny hair openings. Next add hard or soft water. Notice how easily Fitch Shampoo foams into a rich, abundant lather! And this creamy lather carries away all dirt and dandruff without the aid of an after-rinse, leaving your hair soft, manageable and antiseptically clean. Good for all colors and textures of hair! Economical! No wonder Fitch Shampoo is the largest selling shampoo in the United States and Canada!

THE TRUTH ABOUT SOAP SHAMPOOS



Soap Shampoo

This photograph shows germs and dandruff scattered, but not removed, by ordinary soap shampoo.



Fitch Shampoo

All germs, dandruff and other foreign matter completely destroyed and removed by Fitch Shampoo.

After and between Fitch Shampoos you can keep your hair shining and manageable by using a few drops of Fitch's Ideal Hair Tonic every day

Fitch's

Dandruff Remover SHAMPOO

THE F. W. FITCH CO., Des Moines, Iowa · Bayonne, N. J. · Los Angeles, Calif.

(*Continued from page 52*)

Big Red. Then we figured it was an old one. You know, they won't tackle a man unless they're so old they've lost most of their teeth and can't hunt game. This one had a mate. We never got her. I expect she's about as old as he was, and probably just as hungry."

The brush crackled angrily. Sara Bishop was on her feet, moving again. Rack got up, grinning. He thumbed the spark from his cigarette, dropped the remnants in his pocket, and followed her. Her course was still upward, the going still hard. The moon came out to drift along above them. There wasn't much light, but enough so Rack could see Sara dimly. He noticed she avoided the deeper shadows, even if the walking was harder in the light.

Rack said, "I can make a noise like a cougar. Would you care to hear it?"

She spun around to face him.

"Mr. Tinker!" Her voice was weary but biting. "Are you sure I'm not putting you to too much bother?"

"Not at all," he answered pleasantly. "I don't think I ever took a nicer tramp in the woods."

She said, "Oh, damn you—"

She went on walking. Her movements were slow now. When she fell it took her longer to find her feet. The rest periods were more frequent.

AFTER two hours of walking, she finally took one of his cigarettes. Rack thought she was finished then, but she walked another hour. She reached the crest of the hill, followed it for perhaps half a mile. Here the hill sloped down again, here the brush closed in. She looked at the jungle of hazel and vine maple, and then turned away. There was a tree near by in a patch of moonlight. Sara Bishop sat down at its base, resting her head on forearms crossed on drawn-up knees.

Rack said, "I'll build a fire."

She didn't move while he gathered the wood and dry bark. He built a bed for her of spruce boughs. Then he went to her side, shook her gently.

"C'm'on," he said. "I'll tuck you in."

"Go 'way." Her voice was thick with exhaustion. "Please go 'way."

He picked her up. Her head rolled loosely against his arm. She made a feeble effort to push him away and gave it up. The firelight showed a livid bruise on her forehead. Her white blouse was torn and dirty, her red hair tangled. Rack laid her gently on the spruce boughs. He zipped her jacket up against her throat and covered her with his own stag coat. Bending over her, his face sober, he brushed the hair out of her eyes.

"Pup," he said, "you've got something!"

Alone together in the woods, will Sara and Rack come to an understanding? Can he save the Bishop contract? Unexpected things happen swiftly and excitingly in next week's chapter.

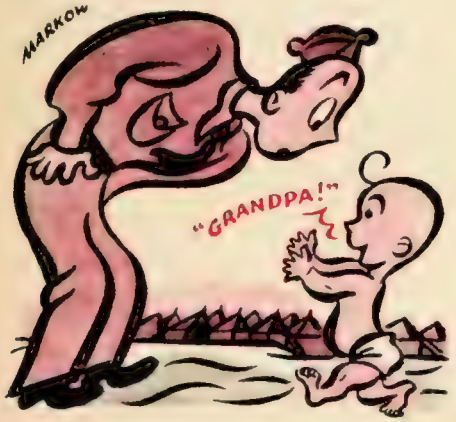
THIS MAN'S WAR

CONDUCTED BY OLD SARGE

I DUCKED a question from Mrs. D. C. of Auburn, Indiana, on the subject of Navy beans a few weeks ago. As you may remember, Mrs. D. C. wrote that her husband is in the Navy and has beans every Saturday for breakfast.

"Can you tell me why?" the good woman asked. I admitted this was one question I didn't know beans about, and added, "How about some of you readers giving us the answer?"

Since then the mailbag has provided me with a liberal education in beans. Pull a chair up to the table and have some:



Granddad

"May I say, being the wife of a C. P. O. who's been in the Navy for twenty-four years' active service, that the breakfast of our Navy on Saturday morning is a tradition," writes a woman in Norfolk, Virginia. "All naval ships and stations serve beans on Saturday and some on Wednesday mornings, too. Even my father says it's true, a Navy man himself for thirty-eight years."

A Yeoman, stationed in Washington, D. C., writes: "Why we get them I do not know, though I've eaten them many a Wednesday and Saturday morning. You'd be surprised how good they taste, and they really stick to one's ribs."

Well, so far that question of "Why?" still hasn't been answered. Let's open another can of beans—I mean another letter. Here's one from Marine Sergeant R. M. of Charlottesville, Virginia:

"I recently left one of our battle wagons on the Atlantic after two and a half years' service with her. I've heard the men growl time and again about the bean situation, so I took it up with the supply officer. The understanding he left me with was that as long as there has been a Navy there have been inspections on Saturday morning by the skipper of the ship, usually around 10 A. M.

"By serving beans, the galley can be cleaned up in a very short period of time and the cooks and messmen can be ready when the zero hour arrives."

And now a little bean history. A Navy man in Effingham, Illinois, writes:

"The traditional beans for Saturday morning breakfast dates back to May 10, 1776, when John Paul Jones was given command of the first American Fleet. It was beans then, and beans it has remained. Of course the catchup in the beans has been an added attraction."

So that's the bean story. And next Saturday morning you might save a forkful for—

OLD SARGE.

* * *

Recently I've noticed a number of marines wearing on the sleeves of their uniforms an insigne having stars on it and the word "Guadalcanal."

Who is authorized to wear this insigne, Sarge? And what do the stars stand for?

F. J. B.,
Naval Training Station,
San Diego, Calif.

This insigne, or "blaze," as it is called, is authorized for the First Division of the U. S. Marine Corps and may be worn by marines who served in the South Pacific area and remain attached to the First Division. The stars represent the stars of the Southern Cross.

* * *

We have been discussing ratings and we believe that you are being neglectful of one profession in This Man's War which should call for at least a tech rating or some form of recognition. In England, as we know, they have the Order of the Knights of the Bath, so why not some such designation or rating for the latrine orderlies of the U. S. Army? We could have a tech rating with an L in place of the T, or the picture of one of Chic Sale's outdoor telephone booths.

In high hopes and expectations,

D. F. W.,
c/o Postmaster,
San Francisco, Calif.

I'll take it up with the Secretary of War first thing in the morning.

* * *

I am eighteen years old and am about to be inducted into the Army. I have only finished my junior year in high school and my draft board says it is impossible to defer me long enough to finish my high-school education.

I would like to get into the Army Air Forces ground-crew organization, but they tell me a high-school diploma is required. Do you know about that, Sarge?

J. C. N., Detroit, Mich.

Your information is incorrect. A high-school diploma is *not* required for Air Forces ground crew. However, the question is whether you will be found fitted for that type of work. All you can do is state your preference after induction, and leave it to the Army to decide where it can best use you.

* * *

My brother, Pfc. Joseph H. Otney, stationed in Ardmore, Oklahoma, became a grandfather last week, and he is only thirty-six years old. I would like to know if Uncle Sam has a soldier in the Army who is younger than that and a granddad, or whether my brother is the youngest.

Mrs. W. A. N., Millard, Neb.

Congratulations to you, your brother, his wife—and the new little Otney. But, sorry to say, I haven't got the answer to your question. How about it, readers?

* * *

Sarge, could you straighten me out on the following alphabet soup?

ADSM DEML JAGD AMG IGD

Pvt. A. C., Jr., Memphis, Tenn.

In the order you listed them, Private, those abbreviations stand for: American Defense Service Medal; Detached Enlisted Men's List; Judge Advocate General's Department; American Military Government (of territories); and Inspector General's Department.

Soup

This department of Liberty is for the men and women of the armed forces of the United States: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, also their families and friends. The identity of letter writers will not be disclosed without their permission. Address your letters to: "Old Sarge," c/o Liberty, 205 East 42d St., New York 17, N. Y.

SICILIAN TASK FORCE

Continued from Page 23

through a mine field sown by the Germans in an earlier attempt to guard the Tunisian coast. Admiral Kirk gives an order to the signal bridge; it is passed to all ships, and the convoy changes formation for the channel passage.

Now is the time for an air attack if we're going to get one. It seems incredible that we haven't been spotted and attacked before this. We are beginning to realize to what extent the North African Air Forces have gained supremacy of the air. Not an enemy aircraft is sighted. Blenheims of the R. A. F. and Army P-39s hover over us in patrol. Throughout the day formations of heavy bombers have passed high overhead on their way to blast the airfields of Sicily prior to our landing.

The mine field is passed and the convoy spreads. We are still headed toward Sicily.

Late in the afternoon we see the cliffs of Malta. Her Spitfires have now taken over the job of air cover for the convoy. Ahead lies the little known monastic island of Gozo. A stiff wind has sprung up. There is not a cloud in the sky as the Spits circle above us in the sunset. Eight hours to go before "H" hour. The mess gong rings and we go below. Surprised men see great platters of steak, potatoes, and peas, then apple pie and two squares of ice cream.

NERVES have begun to tighten a little. In the cabins below, men waiting for their watch turns talk and play cards. Music comes over the ship's public address system. The first recording is the Lord's Prayer; the next one, Rhapsody in Blue.

Some one laughs. "I don't care what you say—the American Navy is the only place in the world where, a few hours before battle, you sit down to a steak dinner, listen to music, and play gin rummy."

The wind has increased. At nine o'clock Admiral Kirk sends another signal. We're headed in for Sicily!

The sky is still clear, but a thirty-two-knot wind is whipping up waves far too high for successful operation of small landing craft. Salt spray crashes over the bow and drenches the forward gun crews. The line of transports to the rear is throwing up long furrows of white spray. This wind throws unexpected complications into well drawn plans. Besides the last-minute hazards of launching the assault craft, this weather is likely to make the troops seasick.

The wind increases as the sun goes down. Our only hope is that it may slacken by "H" hour, now only four hours away.

At ten minutes to eleven a lookout sights a fire in the distance. It's our first visual hint of the nearness of Sicily. It appears to be a hillside fire, probably the mark of some of our bombers. In ten minutes' time the paratroops are due to land.

Those ten minutes pass slowly as our convoy edges forward. Then suddenly we realize they have passed. The paratroops are landing. Tracer bullets perforate the night. The land blooms with orange-red rosettes of flame, bomb bursts, diverting the attention of the shore troops from a skyful of American soldiers dropping behind them.

The sea has calmed as if by command. Parachute flares dropped by suspicious enemy planes now add their light. All this still seems somehow like a huge rehearsal staged for audience reaction.

More flares are dropped. By eleven twenty we're close enough to see the black shore line of the island. Seven minutes later a terrific bombardment begins. There is a vivid marriage of sound and light. Pools of brilliant antiaircraft fire shoot skyward, cutting through the orange smoke of bomb blasts.

The navigator says something to the admiral and orders are given to change course. We veer away from our direct approach to the island beaches and begin our slow approach to the prearranged anchorage.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

When Lord Bacon was Chancellor of England, a witty criminal was brought before him. "Your Honor should let me go," he observed. "We're kin. My name is Hogg, and Hogg is kin to Bacon."

"Not until it's hung," said Bacon.

—Fuller's Thesaurus of Anecdotes.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

By now all paratroops should have landed. The moon is down. Suddenly from the shore line the blue-white cone of a searchlight sweeps the sky. He's high. Evidently looking for planes, ignorant of the massed invasion armada on the water. Overhead we hear the planes. Less than 500 feet directly over our ship the stars are blotted out in the silhouette of a DC-3. Then the message: "Eighty-second Airborne Infantry landed. Planes returning!"

Two hours past midnight. Forty-five minutes to go. All the ships of the invasion force are gathered and waiting, each in its prearranged position. Men on the transports are going over the side and into their landing craft to wait for the signal that will send them ashore.

The beaches are dark now and almost silent except for sporadic firing. Then a new searchlight flashes desperately close to ships on our starboard side. Their hulks are outlined in the white light. It sweeps, lingers, then passes on. We're evidently out of range. Men breathe easier and relax. A few short minutes of this, and months of training and planning will be tested.

A message comes to the admiral. There will be a short delay. But the paratroops have already started. A third searchlight dead ahead begins a sweep. There's a dull explosion and it's snuffed out. The paratroopers are on the job.

Then the message every one has been waiting for:

"All boats off. Going in."

The invasion is under way. Cruisers and destroyers open fire on the shore line. Their shells leave trails of fire as they lob into the beach. To the rear of us, a cruiser sends a salvo in a high arch. Now phosphorus shells are going in—packages of concentrated hell that burst, ricochet, and shower the ground with white heat. Behind this wall of covering gunfire the invasion craft are approaching their beach heads.

THE first wave lands, the men fan out and add their machine-gun fire to that of the naval vessels. The Navy shore fire-control officers contact the ships and the shelling changes direction. The landing craft return to the transports for more men, guns, and equipment, shuttling back and forth until dawn.

Just after daybreak the mess boys bring boxes of Army "K" rations to the decks. A line forms in front of a ten-gallon can of hot coffee. Tired soldiers and sailors are sleeping in out-of-the-way corners.

The day is brilliant, the water a peculiar peacock green. Back of the beaches, distant gunfire sounds from country that resembles a Wyoming landscape. Spitfires spiral in what looks like a lazy patrol at 300 miles an hour. Daylight shows the disposition of our ships. The water is crowded with transports, small craft, and warships.

As the job of unloading the thousands of tons of equipment begins, reports come in from the ground forces. Scoglitti has been captured. The airfields are expected to fall within two days. Up the beach to our left, cruisers and destroyers are pumping shells inland to the spot, eight miles away, where a German tank unit is concentrated.

Our naval fire-control officers who went ashore with the first assault waves are back in those hills directing the fire. They have found observation posts in a high tree, tower, or on a hilltop. With their short-wave radio sets they are sighting the big Navy guns, calling the shells that fall long or short, watching the bursts fall closer and closer to their targets. A hit—another hit. Tanks swerve and burst into flame. American infantry advancing from the beaches won't have to face them.

The report of this accuracy goes back to the ships, and during a lull a gunner goes below. He returns with a stencil paintbrush and a bucket of paint. He begins to dab. When he finishes, on the shield of the gun turret there is a little row of German tanks—victims of a Navy gun.

There are two Navy gun spotters somewhere inland who were dropped last night with the paratroops from North Africa. We have received messages from one, who has been

directing gunfire against a point of enemy resistance. No word from the other. Perhaps he was injured in his jump? A few hours later we are to learn that he landed all right, with a detachment of paratroops, but German tanks trapped them in a gully, machine-gunned them, then ran back and forth over their bodies.

More reports come in. Gela is taken. Vittoria, a city of 45,000, has been captured along with an Italian general.

And, near by, some 150 Italians have been taken prisoner by Lieutenant (j. g.) Pete Coughlin in a manner almost too absurd to seem possible. Lieutenant Coughlin was flying a reconnaissance plane, spotting shellfire, when he noticed what appeared to be a concrete pillbox almost buried in sand dunes. Three Italian soldiers were standing at machine-gun posts around the box.

He described this, and then over his phone asked: "Permission to drop a bomb on this pillbox?"

The answer came back: "Permission granted."

So he made another approach, came in low and released his bomb. Glancing back to see what damage he had done, his eyes bugged. Where before there had been three idle soldiers and an innocent concrete hut, there were now streams of scurrying men emerging from the box with their hands up. They wanted to surrender! Lieutenant Coughlin obliged. He gunned his plane in a sharp bank and swooped low to their rear, spraying the sand with machine-gun fire. They broke into a run from the bullets, and he darted ahead in the direction he wanted them to go and returned. Again he sprayed their heels with lead, herding them like sheep into the arms of a surprised group of American soldiers.

Late in the afternoon one of our mine sweepers signals us. A tired enemy carrier pigeon has lighted on her deck. It was carrying a message from the Italian Army's 206th Division to the Italian twelfth Army Corps. The message deals with the plight of the 206th, and ends with:

Hundreds of anchored ships unloading material undisturbed. Our aviation absent. I have ordered shot two soldiers of the fixed defense of Pachino for being out of presence of the enemy and in civilian clothes. Please send requested pigeons.

GERMAN reconnaissance planes have spotted our position. At night they come over the transport area, to be met with the concentrated fire of every ship at anchor. The operation to date has been far more successful than any one anticipated. If we can get out now without losing ships, the job will have been done.

The unloading of the transports goes on night and day. The material is piling up on the beaches—gasoline, ammunition, food, vehicles, guns, crates. Steel mesh has been laid to form a roadbed on the sand. Caravans of loaded trucks move from the beaches inland through Scoglitti and up toward the front lines.

The few civilians in the little village stand by and watch with wonder in their eyes. Jeeps, half-tracks, and staff cars move through the dusty limestone streets in a steady stream. American soldiers patrol the streets and lie in exhausted sleep inside the stone buildings whose walls are plastered with Fascist military proclamations. Small piles of captured equipment—broken rifles, helmets, knives, and military trinkets—are slowly diminishing under the hands of souvenir hunters.

On the ships, tired men are snatching sleep when they can. Thoughts turn to home and possible leave. Compared to this, all else is anticlimax now.

The radio operator who monitors the news broadcasts marks two items. The first—our ship, as well as several others around us, has been sunk, according to the German news commentator, who calls the ships by name. The other report, from BBC, is that Secretary of War Stimson is in London conferring with Prime Minister Churchill, ostensibly discussing the third point of Allied invasion.

This evening our ships and all the others that have been "sunk" will sail for home.

THE END

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Well-groomed men say, is Thin Gillette!
Its shaving speed, thrift, comfort, too—
Are sure to make a hit with you!
Rigid inspection
assures absolute uniformity
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4 for 10c
Produced By The Maker Of The Famous Gillette Blue Blade

WAITING FOR THE GENERAL

Continued from Page 15

before he had gathered all that was necessary to make an attack successful did he send his men into battle.

On April 3 his Air Force performed its first mission out of India—the successful raid on the Andaman Islands. The raid was led by Brereton in person.

I thought it seemed pretty risky for a general to expose himself to that kind of fun. I must ask him why he'd done it. . . .

Here the aide-de-camp jumped to his feet. I did likewise, and the general—dark, medium-sized, beardless and spectacled—made his hurried entrance. "You may go in," said the ADC, not a minute after the chief had disappeared into his office.

Naturally we talked of Ploesti and I congratulated the general on this new brilliant success.

"Thanks," he said, shrugging his shoulders, "but we really don't know yet and may not for some time to come. All we can say is that it was an honest effort and that considerable damage has been done. Just how considerable remains to be seen."

"You've been planning this for a long time," I said. "May I ask, sir, for how long?"

"We'd failed once," he said. "Remember? Way back in May, 1942. Ever since then this large-scale low-level attack has been under consideration. It has been a trying experience for our men."

"THEY are *your* men," I inserted, "and they seem to like it. Have you any particular method, any formula for being a good leader?"

"I raise hell with them," he told me, "when they won't do what I want them to do, and pat them on the back when they do. Above all, however, I try to maintain the closest possible contact with them. Continued inspection and moral support are what's needed. Also, you must be ready to take lessons from them and must never ask them to do what you wouldn't be ready to do yourself."

I thought of the Andamans raid and wondered whether he'd participated in any more recent missions.

"Well, yes," he replied hesitantly. "I was over Italy a little while ago, but I don't think that's of much importance really. In fact, it has never been mentioned in the papers. I didn't want it to be. We're all doing that sort of thing simply because it's healthy for the morale of the men. Otherwise we wouldn't have any business to go out there making our co-pilots nervous. I'm all against joy rides on the part of generals, but sometimes it can't be helped."

He smiled, looking like an embarrassed teacher rather than like a commanding general. But what attracted me most was his utter lack of pretension. Not a trace of cageyness or conceit could be found in his manner, nor was there any of the forbidding reserve often displayed by prominent Europeans. He was refreshingly natural.

"Are you married, sir?" I asked.

"Why, yes, indeed," he assured me.

"Any children?"

"Two, from my first marriage. They're grown up, though, and I haven't seen them for some time."

I wanted to know where his present wife lived, and learned that she was in the habit of commuting between Dallas and San Antonio, having relatives in both places.

"She's quite good at writing," he said, "and I'm getting my square deal of mail. Yet I never know where she actually is."

It was at this point that I put the question which, had I asked it at an earlier stage, might well have finished me off.

"And what," I ventured, "do you think of girls in uniform?"

"Fortunately," I actually heard him say, "I've had no experience with that particular species."

"Excuse me, sir," I interjected, "but did you say *fortunately?*"

"I did," he confirmed mercilessly, "and, what's more, I don't want any of them around here. Positively not."

There was a little pause during which the general cast a short glance at my own uniformed figure. Then he proceeded to inform me that, to his mind, there were enough civilian jobs which women could and should fill; that all they ought to do was to relieve the greatest possible number of men whose place was now at the front, whereas their place, the women's place, was at home.

But didn't he think, I meekly suggested, that women were all right when it came to recreational work and that in their spare time the boys in the desert would welcome a bit of female attention?

The general remained firm.

"Frankly," he said, "I do not think so at all. I would much rather send my men on leave into centers of civilization, wherever it can be done, than have them constantly distracted by the presence of the other sex.

"Moreover," he added, "I don't even believe that they themselves particularly care. The more seasoned among them certainly do not. During this past year I've seen a lot of the boys of the Eighth Army, and I can assure you they're quite accustomed by now to their monastic lives. Why, I've hardly ever heard them talk about women. Which doesn't mean that they'd mind a date with a good-looking girl once in a while."

"Is that so?" I mumbled. But I thought it possible that the boys of the Eighth Army had not wished to discuss their girl problems in the presence of an American general. Besides, they were English and perhaps less girl-minded than the Americans—or in a quieter way.

As if he'd read my thoughts, the general continued, "And, mind you, it's the same story with our own chaps. You send them on leave and, next thing you know, they are off on a sight-seeing trip. They'd go up to Palestine or to Eritrea or just to some of the more noteworthy places near here. Of course it's all being arranged for them and wherever they go they're being properly taken care of. Also, there are quite a few American leave camps scattered throughout the Middle East, and on the whole our boys are not having too bad a time even in the absence of female soldiers."

"Thanks, general," I said, "I guess that's all."

ON my way home I ran into a friend of mine.

"Hot," he stated. "Care for some lemon squash?" While we were waiting for it, he said, "Incidentally, here's the news, my dear. According to usually well informed circles, the general won't receive any woman war correspondent."

I gasped. My friend sighed condolingly. "Sorry, my dear," he said, "but he just won't."

THE END

Dandruff.

THE STAR OF SARUNAGI

Continued from Page 13

"Ensign Andy Hale. Navy Nursing Corps."

"Andy?" He grinned again. "Funny name for a girl."

"Isn't it, though?" she wistfully agreed. "Now you get some sleep. You haven't got much time. Dirty Joe will be back again at dawn."

"Who the blazes is Dirty Joe?"

"You'll find out soon enough."

So Johnny sank back, letting her adjust her boat cape over him. "Andy!" he snorted before he fell asleep. "Andy! What a hell of a name for a girl!"

THAT'S how Johnny Rostrom, bosun's mate first class, joined a band of castaways on Sarunagi Island. But he slept with a smile on his lips, remembering Andy's sea-blue eyes. Until the snarling thunder of a heavy gun jerked him up on his elbows. Thinking himself still aboard the Kane and going into action, he wondered how he'd missed the call to general quarters. Then the shell screamed over, exploding somewhere in the south. He half leaped to his feet, felt a drench of pain along his whole right leg, staggered, and sank back. Prone on a boulder-strewn beach, peering seaward in the first gray dawnlight, he saw what Andy meant by "Dirty Joe"—a Jap destroyer.

Dirty Joe was clearing the southern cape of Sarunagi Island, his silhouette sharp against a paling sky, his number two gun stabbing orange flame, the thunder of it slapping against the jungled land. He fired singles, as if on a target range. Johnny Rostrum's gunner's instinct ticked the facts off carefully. Two-funneled; raised fo'c'sle; lumpy bridge and control tower; battery of four-point-sevens. Wakatake class. Range five thousand. Speed no more than twelve. And couldn't Johnny have been blasting that devil to hell with the Kane's five-inchers now!

But all he could do was hug the sand while Dirty Joe steamed leisurely just beyond the tide-rip water marking the shoal of the barrier reef across the mouth of the bay, one of those four-point-sevens regularly darting a tongue of fire out of an obscene mouth of smoke. Until the Jap drew the northern point of land abeam and hauled seaward after lashing out with his gun for the last time. Then Johnny hunted in the flotsam, found a heavy stick, and staggered erect.

He limped painfully toward a low shoulder of land that lay between him and the southern cape. He thought Andy and the rest would be over there, and he was right. They came around it just as the sun exploded like a bombshell out of the eastern rim of sea. He waited, leaning heavily on his crooked stick. He saw he'd been right about Andy's copper-golden hair. He thought how fortunate a man was who could see her like this, coming toward him in a sunrise full of the sound of the sea and the rush of a hot west wind.

"It's like Andy says. Our troubles are done." The voice reached Johnny in a Texas drawl—Corporal Rusty's, by the color of his hair. "Now we got the Navy on our side."

Johnny watched them coming like a rag-clothed honor guard for the long-legged girl who walked in their midst with pride. They wore side arms. Some of them carried tommy guns, and Sergeant Lewis, rawboned and sun-baked, had a Garand over his shoulder by its sling. His ink-black eyes appraised Johnny impersonally.

"You the skipper?" Johnny asked him. "If you are, I'm Johnny Rostrom, reporting for duty, sir."

The sergeant must have liked that, for he gave a quick nod. "If you mean who's in command," he said, "we just pass it around to where it fits best."

"You can make your speeches while we eat," Andy's throaty voice cut in. "And you, Johnny Rostrom—I told you to keep off that leg. Sit down!"

"You see what I mean?" the sergeant said, grinning.

Watching Andy pass the ration of tinned beef and the jug of hot rice, Johnny said in a taut whisper to him, "We got to get her out of here. This is no place for her."

"You don't have to whisper about her, sailor," a black-headed Oregon kid called over aloud. "She's one of us. She knows the score. You got any good ideas?"

"We got to get a boat," he said. "We got to get Andy out of here."

"You just stick around," the lad from Oregon grinned. "Dirty Joe's got lots of boats. He's gonna send one for us any morning now."

"That's right," said Rusty. "We were waiting for him yonder. We thought sure it would be today."

"Well, what's holding him up?"

"The sarge's shore battery." Corporal Rusty grinned, waving his arm toward South Cape's seaward height. "Mr. Moto figures he better knock out them nice three-inchers first."

JOHNNY'S head spun round. Three-inchers? On the hill side in the hot white daylight he could make out the long black snouts through a jungle tangle under brushy camouflage. His eyes went wide. "Why," he cried, "a salvo from them guns could—"

"They ain't guns, sailor. They're logs. Dirty Joe knocks 'em over in the morning—we set 'em up in the night. He probably figures we're saving what shells we got till he sends his landing force ashore. Tomorrow for sure, we think."

Johnny sank back, growling, "Once he finds those guns don't talk, his four-point-sevens will—"

"We figured that out, too," the sergeant interrupted dryly. "Sarunagi Island was an emergency typhoon

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shelter for our Navy's PT boats. The break in the barrier reef and the channel leads to the cove and landing stage a few miles around that spit of land. You can't see it from here, but we're living on the iron rations we found in the shack. That's where we got our arms from, too. And that's where Dirty Joe will land. I got a couple of old Brownings emplaced and some neat little tommy-gun nests to take him in enfilade. We'll give him hell as long as the ammunition lasts. He'll get us, all right—but he won't get Andy Hale. We settled that long ago."

THEY all smiled quietly. They were in agreement on it. And they all looked over at Andy Hale. She was the embodiment for them of their aspirations and their hope. She was womanhood to them; she was the race. Maybe Johnny Rostrom sensed this, for he looked away to where the Jap destroyer was nothing now but a small black speck.

"He'll use the motor whaler," Johnny said, half to himself. "With luck, I could sail a boat like that clear down to the Australia coast. We ought to take our chances with the sea."

"What'd I tell you, sarge?" he heard Corporal Rusty's voice explode. "We got the Navy with us now! What's a Jap destroyer to this lad? I bet he could even tell us what to do with that torpedo in its cradle by the boat shack. How about it, sailor? Ain't you a tin-can man? Torpedoes ought to be your special dish."

Johnny faintly grinned. "A torpedo isn't much good, Rusty, till you get it in the water. And it doesn't run by magic. It runs by compressed air. How do we get a couple of thousand pounds into the pressure flask? Maybe you got a bicycle pump?"

"Oh," said Rusty, gloomily subsiding. "I guess the damn tin fish will just have to lay there and sweat."

Johnny wasn't really listening; he was thinking of other things. But what that voice said slipped down slowly into his mind. Until it touched a thing there that seemed to be waiting for it. A trigger clicked. And all of a sudden his head jerked around and he snapped sharply, "What did you say that tin fish was doing?"

"I said it was sweating!" Rusty growled. "What's wrong with that? You'll sweat too when that sun starts—"

He stopped short, stared at Johnny, amazed. So did the others. Because Johnny's eyes were blazing and he was strugging to his feet with the help of his crooked stick.

"Where is it?" Johnny roared. "If that fish is *sweating*—it's *charged!* It's the pressure does it! Torpedoes always sweat when the flasks are full!"

So two of them carried him around the spit of land and down to the landing stage. The torpedo looked enormous in its cradle. One of the PT boats, crippled with battle damage, had been forced in here to repair herself and the skipper had decided to lighten her by the weight of one fish. That's what Johnny thought as he turned and saw all of them with their eager eyes upon him.

"Well?" breathed Rusty.

"It's hot!" said Johnny.

"Now look, sailor." Sergeant Lewis's tone was dry. "That thing must weigh a couple of tons. You want us to pick it up and throw it at the Jap? What good is—"

"We got to get it in the water!" Johnny's face had a stubborn look. His mind was gathering his knowledge together. Odd bits of fact kept dropping into place. "When one of these fish slaps out of a torpedo tube along the slot, a metal finger snaps back the starting lever on her as she passes. That opens the valve. The wheel lets go with a roar and she's off before she even hits the sea. Why can't I make a rope lanyard fast to that starting lever and pull it back by hand? Why not?"

He realized now that he was doing his thinking aloud. His voice rushed fiercely. "We've got to manhandle this thing along the beach back to where we were, north of the spit. We'll roll her downgrade on skid logs and keep her under control with parbuckles. There's plenty of rope. I'll show you what I mean. Then I want two heavy logs. We'll anchor 'em a fathom apart in water just deep enough to float the fish. Then—"

"Float?" the sergeant roared. "That brute?"

"Sure! With the air flask full, a torpedo's negative buoyancy can't be more than forty pounds. In rope slings she'll hang easy between two logs. We can launch her! The Japs won't be looking for torpedoes coming at 'em from the land. We'll take 'em by surprise. If they send their boat ashore and we can slam their destroyer with this fish, then maybe we could handle the landing force. If we did—we'd have a boat! We could get Andy out of here!"

THAT'S what Johnny Rostrom cried out beside a cradled torpedo in the shadow of the steaming jungle of Sarunagi Island. And the rest of that day was a fever of heartbreaking toil. But by sunset two logs lay anchored in the shallows, held in position by mooring lines to rocks ashore. Between those logs Johnny had his tin fish slung, pointing seaward. The lanyard leading ashore, lying in coiled bights on the beach, was made fast to the starting lever.

"I'll slam down with the ax on the two rope slings supporting the fish between the logs," Johnny explained. "The ropes are weighted so they'll fall away quick—not foul the rudder and wheel—when I give the signal to fire. I'll need some one on the beach to pull the lanyard for me."

"That will be me," said Andy Hale. The sergeant frowned, shaking his head, but the girl repeated firmly, "That will be me, Larry!"

Sergeant Lewis looked at her with an odd warm light in the depth of his tired eyes. Then he looked around at all the men, and he saw that same thing there. So he nodded—and Johnny Rostrom was to remember that nod, and what Larry Lewis told him later before he led his men away to take up their battle posts.

"Come dawn tomorrow," the sergeant said, his shadow gaunt in starlight, "I'd trade that cockeyed torpedo rig for half a battery of seventy-fives. Whether you get it launched or whether you don't—you stay where you are with Andy Hale."

HOME FRONT

"I'm new here. When is our slack season?"

"To hell with that!" Johnny Rostrom growled. "After I get that lanyard pulled, I start hobbling to join the scrap. I got some personal debts of my own to—"

"You listen to me!" The sergeant's fist clamped Johnny's arm. "By the time you could drag yourself around that shoulder of land the Japs would all be dead—or we would, and they'd pick you off like a crippled duck. Here. Take this." He pressed a service automatic into Johnny's hand, and his voice rang hard and cold as its steel:

"You keep your eye on that point of land. Don't move. If the first man you see come around it is a Jap—the rest of us will be dead. You can count on that. We guarantee it. In that case"—the words dropped one at a time from the sergeant's lips, like drops of bitter acid—"in that case you will take care of Andy for us before you go over the hill yourself."

Johnny looked down at what he held in his hand. He heard the sergeant saying in a low voice of awful memory, "We know what Japs can do to white women. We saw it up Iloilo way. We think a lot of Andy. You take care of her for us."

So he nodded. "O. K., Larry," he said, from the heart. "You fellas can count on me."

"Would a bloody nose help any?"

THEN after a while they went away and he was all alone with Andy. He was sitting in the starlight with her where the wind was damp and warm, the palm fronds noisy, and the sea sucking at the sand. When she looked up at him, he could see her slow, grave smile, like a promise of the fine things all the young deserve. And all of a sudden a sense of vastness touched him. Not because he had Andy's life in his hands. He felt he was crossing a shadow line between a world that was and the world that ought to be. That was what they had in their hands, he and Andy and all those weary, ragged men waiting in fox holes on the other side of the ridge. So he answered her confident smile with his.

"Andy!" he chuckled. "That's an awful funny name for a girl."

"I've always thought so, too," she wistfully agreed. "That's why I've never told any one about it. Maybe I ought to tell you now, Johnny. My father was a sea captain. His ship almost foundered twenty years ago in an east coast hurricane. When it passed, the first observation he had through the black scud of storm was the sight of a star in the north. He was deeply grateful. So when he came home and I was born, he named me for it—Andromeda. They just call me Andy for short. I'm named for a star called Andromeda."

"Andromeda!" said Johnny, who was a seafaring man himself. "By golly, I think that's fine!"

"Do you really?"

"I sure do. I hope I'll name my own kids half as good as that. I'm crazy about kids, Andy." He felt he ought to tell her at a time like this. "I want you to know."

"I am too, Johnny. I love to see them laughing when they're happy, the way their funny little faces get so all wrinkled up."

That's what they talked about while they waited together for the dawn. Johnny would always remember how it came to Sarunagi Island. Two pistol shots, like drumbeats striking a taut-stretched stillness—Larry's lookout signal from the cove. Johnny wasn't alarmed. When he opened his eyes, he found he had been dozing with his head in Andy's lap. The first thing he saw was her lovely face smiling into his to let him know she was ready.

Dirty Joe's silhouette crawled out from behind the land, control tower stark against a misty sky. The four-point-sevens roared in salvo. They weren't firing singles now. The shells came screaming over in the half light, erupting against South Cape. The Japs were blasting at what they thought was the sergeant's three-inch battery on the hill. This was barrage fire to cover a landing force! At the mouth of the barrier break, they put their motor whaler in the water. Crowded to the gunwales, it started running down the channel, while the destroyer rocked with the recoil of its guns.

Johnny stood in the water beside his anchored logs, a short-handled ax in his hand. He looked back just once, got his clearest sight yet of Ensign Andy Hale. Slim and straight, the land breeze plucking her skirt and her copper-gold hair, she stood on a shelf of yellow sand with a rope lanyard in her fists, waiting calmly for his command. He thought she was smiling still, but of that he wasn't sure.

He looked seaward, the facts ticking through his mind. Range five thousand when it came abeam. Target speed twelve. Torpedo course zero degrees to cut the target track—and the Navy survey chart would be accurate. His settings were good, if the Jap held on the way he had the days before. It would take something more than three minutes to make the torpedo run. Time was the factor now. Three minutes for Dirty Joe meant a little over a thousand yards. That was the distance to gauge. With skill! So Johnny kept his eyes on that ugly shape steaming with all its battery aflame.

"Now!" he screamed suddenly. "Now, Andy! Now!"

HE gestured fiercely with his ax, knowing she couldn't hear him in that thunderous bombardment. Then he slashed the blade down, a swift double stroke fore and aft of the log, severing the two ropes that held his weapon in slings. The nearer log plunged wildly; the other one reared. Between them a fierce whirlpool boiled up, staggering him backward. He heard the wild thrash of the torpedo wheel, saw a long sleek shape leap seaward under water. Launched! It was launched! He wanted to scream that out, and he thought he did. But all he was certain of after that was sitting on the low outcropping of a boulder on the beach,

dripping, his injured leg one searing stab of pain. And Andy sat on the sand very close in front of him. He could see the back of her head, the curve of her shoulder, and how her hair tumbled down to the nape of her neck like a coppery waterfall.

"Don't turn around, Andy. You mustn't turn around to look at me."

"Yes," she said. "I know."

"The Jap is depressing his guns. His barrage fire is walking down the hill."

"I can't see the landing boat any more."

"It's in the channel hidden by the spit."

"But I don't hear any shooting there."

"Larry's holding his fire. He knows when he opens the Jap will spot his position and those four-point-sevens will—"

"They're such fine fellows, Johnny. They're all so—"

"They're all crazy about you."

"Yes, I know."

"I am too, Andy."

HE felt her tense against his knee where his automatic rested. He put his hand quickly on her shoulder so she wouldn't turn around. "You mustn't look at me! Just listen," he said. "I never thought there were girls like you, Andy. I hope there are others, but about that I'm not sure. All I know is, if you were mine I'd—" He stopped. But only for an instant. "It would be wonderful," he told her quietly, "if those kids I talked about last night were yours as well as mine. Because I love you, Andy. That's what it is. And I've got to tell you while I can."

She was silent. She bowed her head for a moment. Seaward, Dirty Joe still thundered murderous salvos while the night dissolved and the dawnlight grew. Livid jets of flame, explosions roaring, and Johnny and a clear-eyed girl with a funny name trying to compress life and all its living into a tiny fragment out of time. Three minutes. Who ever thought three minutes could encompass the whole of one man's life? Yet a quiet part of Johnny Rostrom waited, taut and trembling, to hear what Andy Hale would say.

She raised her head. Johnny couldn't see her eyes, but he knew they would have a fine, proud look.

"I'm glad you told me. Johnny. They'd be lovely children—ours. I love you, too."

"We'd name the flax-haired girl Andromeda."

"And the red-headed boy would be John. But if we can't, Johnny"—strange how strong and clear he heard her stirring voice!—"if we can't, there'll be children when we get this done—even if they won't be ours. They ought to have a place to play, a place where they can laugh. That's how we'd want it, if they were ours."

"Yes, Andy. Kids are kids, no matter whose."

At that moment, seaward, an enormous sheet of flame burst skyward in a pillar of foul brown smoke. Under it, like a small black toy, the Jap destroyer broke apart. Her after magazine exploded, hurling a litter of débris. The two must have cried out in wild, fierce exultation as they watched her sink in spreading pools of oil and floating specks. But then they heard machine guns chattering. There was shouting in that uproar, too, and they couldn't tell how long it lasted. When the stillness came, it was strange, unearthly. Brush crackled behind the spit of land. The sound of that seemed louder than gunfire. Andy's hand reached up to where Johnny's still rested on her shoulder. Her fingers closed on his.

"You mustn't turn around, Andy." He snapped off the safety of his automatic. "You mustn't look at me."

"Yes, I know," she said. "It's a gun you have at the back of my head."

"Yes, Andy."

"You mustn't worry, Johnny. I'm remembering they would be very lovely children—ours. I'm not afraid at all."

Then a man staggered into the open around the spit of land. He was torn and bleeding. He had a Garand rifle in his hands. His eyes still held the proud blue fire of Sergeant Larry Lewis's.

"Your boat's in there." He made a broken gesture toward the cove behind him. "I'm sorry we got her full of holes. But you patch her up, Johnny. You take command from here. We don't savvy the sea so good." Then all of a sudden he pitched face forward in the sand. When they reached him, he could just look up, smiling at Andy Hale. "I always dreamed about a girl like you," he said. "Johnny, you take good care of her."

THAT's what Johnny Rostrom was to remember best. That, and how the sun exploded over Sarunagi Island. How Andy looked, saying a simple prayer. And how those who were left put out to sea in a patched-up motor whaler with Jap markings on its bows, a girl whose name was Andromeda beside Johnny in the stern-sheets.

That's why the rest of it wasn't a trouble to Johnny in his first command—he had what help he needed. And why he could make his strange report with confidence when the Australian corvette skipper picked him up off Bathurst Island.

"We knocked a Jap destroyer over, sir. Up Sarunagi way. This was her landing boat." And he knew he spoke the truth when he added proudly, "We never could have made it, sir, except we had Andromeda to help us."

So they gave Johnny Rostrom the Navy Cross. He frowned when the admiral pinned it on his chest. He knew he didn't deserve it, thinking of Sergeant Lewis and some others who were resting far away. He even wondered if he deserved a girl like Andy Hale. So he didn't wonder that his name instantly became the by-word for a fabulous good fortune. Johnny Rostrom's luck! In the ships and all the harbors of the South Pacific fleets.

"Can you imagine navigation such as that?" Even Captain Barclay chortled, telling the admiral about it on the flagship's quarterdeck. "That bosun's mate says he sailed that boat all the way here from the Philippines with the help of Andromeda. Why, you can't even see Andromeda in these latitudes! He must have used a ouija board!"

But somehow the admiral didn't even smile.

"Where would any of us be these days," he said with gravity, "if we didn't steer by a star in the sky no human eye can see?"

THE END

COLONEL STOOPNAGLE'S FICTIONARY *(Unabashed)*

ATLASTIC: We finally found a rubber band!

FEWD: A small dispute.

CALLERFLOWERS: A bouquet from a wrestler.

SQUAIR: A hunk of atmosphere with equal sides.

ASSPIRIN: For stopping a donkey's headache.

FEZTIVAL: A Turkish celebration.

NOGOTIATION: The deal is off.

OMITT: To forget your baseball glove.

HORRORZONTAL: Hitler on his deathbed.

SIGHPHER: A distraught naught.

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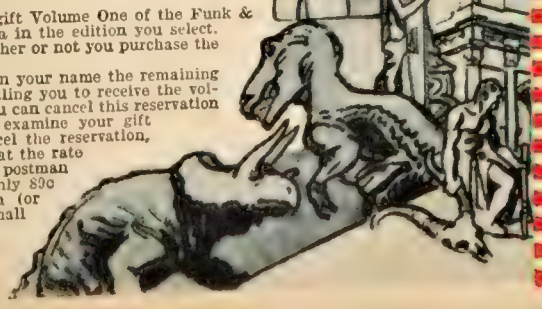

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PATRIOTS WITHOUT UNIFORM

MUSIC FOR THE SERVICES

BY ELIZABETH HENNEY

WASHINGTON POST PHOTO

Music—and do the services love it! That's Mrs. Stuart Godfrey at the piano.

HE was whistling gaily as he took her parking-lot ticket. As she turned to get into the car, she suddenly realized that he was giving out with Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

"You must be mighty fond of good music," she said, and the boy in blue dungarees smiled back and said, "Yes, ma'am. I'm going in the Army next week, and I'm going to save every cent of my pay during the war, and when it's over I'm going to get me the finest grand piano there is."

A few evenings later she herself was giving out with good music at the piano in the Soldiers, Sailors and Marines Club in Washington. She had started with Grieg's Concerto and gone on from there to request numbers.

Suddenly a young sailor stepped up and said, "Please, ma'am, can you play the tenor aria from Manon?" She said yes, of course—then discovered she didn't have the score of it with her and couldn't play it from memory.

Her embarrassment was heightened by the realization that this was one of the favorite songs of all tenors, and that she had failed a serviceman in so slight a request.

Out of those two incidents came the determination of Mrs. Stuart Godfrey to provide, as her contribution to the war effort, Music for the Services whenever and wherever required.

Mrs. Godfrey, wife of Brigadier General Godfrey of the U. S. Army Engineer Corps, is a concert player and a composer; she has recently written the music for That's the Infantry, the stirring words of which were written by Major General Edwin F. Harding, who was her husband's classmate and roommate at West Point. She has always had a soft spot in her heart for any one who was fond of music—so, once the idea of Music for the Services had taken hold, she did not let it rest.

First she went over to Bolling Field and spoke to the Women's Club there, on the invitation of Mrs. Henry H. Arnold, wife of General Arnold, chief of the Army Air Forces. The members of the club, wives of air officers, listened with interest, and at the end of her talk one of them stepped up and said, "I haven't any musical talent, but I'd like to help, and maybe this dollar will get you started."

It did. Knowing there was a need for a piano in a near-by Army camp, Mrs. Godfrey put a whole dollar's worth of classified ad in the papers, asking for the donation of a piano. She got *four* pianos for that dollar.

Next she got in touch with Clara Herbert, the District of Columbia librarian, who put space in the public libraries at her disposal and made them all collection centers for donations. And the donations flowed in. To date, Music for the Services has placed more than seventy-five pianos in Army camps; has collected, mended, and distributed more than 20,000 pieces of sheet music; has distributed more than seventy-five phonographs with records, and innumerable other instruments.

A surprising request for "a string quartet" came from the Naval Station at Patuxent, Maryland. The four instruments were promptly sent, with an assortment of music for quartet or trio. They were acknowledged with fervent thanks; a whole cluster of the sailors at Patuxent were genuine musicians who had been eating their hearts out. A piano has been sent to Greenland and a phonograph, by airplane, to Nome, Alaska. The Stitch Club, a group of wives of engineer officers at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, had heard of the need of a phonograph in Nome, taken up a collection, and gotten in touch with Mrs. Godfrey. The piano for Greenland was donated by the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, and the Juilliard School of Music in New York has donated seven phonographs with twenty-five records for each, to be sent where needed.

There is no formality about Music for the Services, though because of its rapid growth there has had to be some assistance. Quinta Frey is in charge of a group of volunteers who mend, bundle, and catalogue the sheet-music donations. Mrs. Eugene Byrnes, president of the Friday Morning Music Club, is the honorary chairman, Mrs. Godfrey the acting one. Mildred Frame, whose husband (now in the service) was a member of the National Symphony, is the secretary, and Adela Paine, who has worked with the National Symphony for years, is the treasurer in charge of such financial donations as come in. Publicity is handled by Marian McGregor of the U. S. Air Forces.

Recently the crew of the Kennabeet, a Coast Guard cutter that operates off the coast of Avon, North Carolina, sent a plaintive note. They couldn't have any radio aboard their cutter, and life was too rocky for a piano or a phonograph, but they sure would like a little tunefulness of some kind now and then.

They got it. Mrs. Godfrey sent them four harmonicas, four ocarinas, and a ukulele, with instruction booklets and a variety of selections.

THE END

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT: The Starlight Roof of the Waldorf still sparkles with such ornamental and dressy females as Loretta Young, Gloria Vanderbilt di Cicco, and Mrs. Bob Hope, but much of the old formality is missing. Not long ago any couple in daytime clothes would have hesitated to crash in, but wartime and warm weather introduced a dash of Coney Island into almost all of Manhattan's night life. Now office clothes can go practically any-

where after dark and find plenty of other little simple street-length black numbers out with dinner-coatless men.

MORE ABOUT CATS: One of the most photographed cats in the world, black Bob, who sat in on the late Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's conferences during the Munich crisis, is dead. In his youth he lived at No. 10 Downing Street, residence of England's prime ministers. Shortly before his untimely demise, at the age of seven, he resided at the Foreign Office, but frequently returned to Downing Street for a Churchill pat on the konk. . . . Victoria, mother of four, and mouser extraordinaire at the Senate Restaurant, was in a spot when the restaurant was closed for renovation. Chef Victor Lenzi appealed to the Washington public to provide homes for the four kittens and Victoria, who, until she became a mother, had been hideously maligned. Because of her black-and-white face, which faintly suggested nasty Adolf's toothbrush mustache, she had been called Hitler. Then four kittens arrived to prove she was a female and no fooling. Naturally, she had to see that the youngsters who saved her so-called face were well placed when their ancestral home turned on them and the painters arrived complete with turpentine to threaten their tenure.

Imagine Chef Lenzi's predicament when his telephone rang all day long after his appeal for homes for the brood. He hadn't one tenth enough cats to fill orders. Besides, when it came to a showdown, he found himself unable to part with Vic—said he would need a graduate ratter as soon as the Senate Restaurant reopened. Meaning no offense. Vic's kittens were distributed as follows: Ensign Alice Misula got Number One, four-year-old Sally Kimball got Number Two, and Senator Reed's granddaughters Betsy and Mary Bundy took over Number Three. Limpy, the fourth kitten, is staying at the Capitol with momma because of an injured paw and Chef Lenzi's soft heart.

The Desperado of Juarez

[News item from El Paso: "Francisco Vega of Juarez was sentenced today to sixty days in jail for smuggling bobby pins into the United States."]

Francisco sits upon his frances.
No more for him those come-on glances.
No longer can he win the girls
For whom he once connived at curls.
Today their hair is in their eyes,
And much to Mr. V.'s surprise
He's in the clink, where he begins
To hate the thought of bobby pins.

LOVE IN BLOOM: Jay Thorpe, Incorporated, of Manhattan's Fifty-Seventh Street, waxes lyrical about an "affinity ring, hands-across-the-sea gift for a girl in love." Clasped hands may be pulled apart to reveal his and her initials beneath. For fourteen-carat-gold lovers, the price is $32.50. In sterling, with 14-carat-gold hands, $12.75.

OUR HERO: Our favorite hero of the war is Old George of London, whose habits were glowingly described by a U. S. Army officer home

on leave. George and his cronies stuck to their club despite fierce air raids. But while his pals rushed for the basement shelter whenever an alarm sounded, George always sat tight and kept right on with his reading. The only concession he made to enemy planes was to put an anxious hand over the top of his glass to protect his whisky-and-soda from falling plaster.

Taste . . .
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Similar names can't make imitating-drinks similar to Southern Comfort, the grand old Drink of the South. Rich-flavored, subtly potent, highly versatile, it provides an excellent base for short or tall mixed drinks...may also be used straight as a liqueur if used discreetly. Avoid substitutes ...be sure you get genuine Southern Comfort!
FULL 100 PROOF
Southern Comfort goes further and gives new piquancy and zest to your favorite drinks. Try making an Old Fashioned, Manhattan or Hi-Ball with Southern Comfort. You will be pleasantly surprised.
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Helps Build Up Resistance Against It!

If at such times *you* suffer from cramps, headache, backache, tired, nervous feelings, distress of "irregularities", periods of the blues—due to functional monthly disturbances — try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound to relieve such symptoms because this famous medicine has a soothing effect on *one of woman's most important organs.*

Taken regularly — Pinkham's helps build up resistance against such symptoms. Also a fine stomachic tonic! Follow label directions.

LYDIA E. PINKHAM'S VEGETABLE COMPOUND

LIBERTY GOES TO THE MOVIES

BY HARRIET GOULD

Eddie Cantor tells Horton and Sakall that they can have his Dinah Shore for the benefit—IF he can run the show.

But Dennis Morgan, Joan Leslie, and Eddie Cantor (now playing the role of "Joe Simpson") have other plans.

Olivia de Havilland, George Tobias, and Ida Lupino let themselves go for some razzmatazz—eight to the bar.

THANK YOUR LUCKY STARS

(Warner Brothers)
All Star Cast

THANK YOUR LUCKY STARS, Warner Brothers' parade of its all-star properties, looks as if some genius in public relations had lined up most of the important talent on the lot—and then deliberately set out to break down what years of dignified publicity and outstanding performances had built up.

Or maybe you *won't* mind seeing the screen's first lady, Bette Davis, letting down her hair to sing (?) They're Either Too Young or Too Old, and being tossed around the floor by an overexuberant young jitterbug; or two of Hollywood's leading tear-jerkers, Ida Lupino and Olivia de Havilland, paired with George Tobias in a boogie-woogie song-and-dance routine.

This kind of activity sets the pace for the whole of Thank Your Lucky Stars. Humphrey Bogart appears fleetingly—and unshaven—is bested in an argument and wonders "what his fans will think." John Garfield kids his gangster roles with a gagged-up version of My Mommy Done Told Me. Such uninhibited exhibitionism may be amusing, but it's pretty embarrassing to watch your favorite dramatic actors prove they're human by sacrificing their dignity.

However, if this doesn't bother you, you'll probably get a kick out of Thank Your Lucky Stars. The headliners in this one have stuck their tongues in their cheeks, their reputations in their pockets, and they seem to have a fine old time lampooning themselves.

This super-review of Warners' talent resembles Paramount's Star-Spangled Rhythm insofar as it is a panorama of the big names on the lot with a gossamer story about a big benefit show on which to hang the various variety and musical numbers.

Eddie Cantor—with musical and comic assistance from Joan Leslie (she does imitations), Dennis Morgan, Edward Everett Horton, and S. Z. Sakall—has the fairly thankless job of carrying the story part of the film. Arthur (Dancing in the Dark) Schwartz and Frank (Praise the Lord and Pass, etc.) Loesser are responsible for the round dozen new tunes which are ably—if unconventionally—performed by the stars. Dinah Shore has some of the best numbers and Ann Sheridan gives a neat Dorothy Dix lesson to the tune of Love Isn't Born—It's Made.

That isn't all, but it's enough to give you the general idea. Thank Your Lucky Stars is fun set to music by a super (mis)cast.

A LADY TAKES A CHANCE

(RKO)

Jean Arthur, John Wayne

A LOT of people think that Jean Arthur, with her wonderful sense of timing and delightful flair for comedy (which were at their peak in The More the Merrier), can do no wrong. But Miss Arthur is skating on very thin ice in A Lady Takes a Chance. A movie needs a little more than competent performances (which this one certainly has—with John Wayne, Charles Winninger, and Phil Silvers backing up Miss Arthur) to make it good. That "little more" in this case is a good plot. The lady who takes a chance is a working girl who takes a bus trip across the country. You guessed it. She meets cowboy John Wayne and they badger each other all the way to the wedding-bells finish. A Lady Takes a Chance *isn't a bad picture—but it just isn't up to* Jean Arthur's standard.

FIRED WIFE

(Universal)

Louise Allbritton, Diana Barrymore, Robert Paige, Walter Abel

THIS featherweight comedy comes along as an antidote for the current rash of war pictures and donates its share of good escapist fun. It's about a mad marital mix-up involving a stage director (Louise Allbritton), her husband (Robert Paige), and her producer (Walter Abel). Diana Barrymore, as radio's temperamental Sunshine Lady, is on hand to complicate matters, and her gauche performance bears no resemblance to the famous histrionics of her equally famous family. Louise Allbritton, an attractive and competent newcomer, and the other members of the cast, however, combine their talents to make Fired Wife an amusing little movie—a bit of fluff that will pep up many a good double bill.

Published Here Every 4 Weeks

If, within the next few weeks, you find people on buses and street corners suddenly breaking into unexplained and uncontrollable guffaws, don't start worrying about the mental state of the nation. These chortling citizens will merely be recalling some of their favorite laughs in **TRUE TO LIFE.**

• • •

"True To Life" is more than a great Paramount comedy. It is a hilarity wave that's inundating the country.

• • •

This story of a family who go on the air without knowing it is whacky but wise, ludicrous but shrewd.

• • •

You will laugh with Father—Victor Moore—who can invent anything except a way to keep his daughter home nights.

• • •

Daughter Mary Martin is worth $1,000 a week—as story material for two radio-serial writers.

• • •

To get the material without Mary's knowing it, writer Dick Powell disguises himself as an indigent boarder.

• • •

To get Mary without Dick's knowing it, Franchot Tone disguises himself—very slightly—as a "wolf."

• • •

Their romantic skullduggery leads to delightful complications and some equally delightful songs, including the widely whistled "Mister Pollyanna."

• • •

For an accomplishment so joyous and right, we salute director George Marshall and producer Paul Jones. They have given us a motion picture that is "True To Life"—and twice as funny.

• • •

And now on your left, ladies and gentlemen, is a very beautiful young person you have probably never seen before. To our mind she is one of the most exciting new stars that ever stepped through the gates of the Paramount lot. Her name is Gail Russell, and she's one big reason why you are urgently invited to **THE UNINVITED**, which stars Ray Milland, Ruth Hussey and Donald Crisp—coming soon from

Paramount Pictures

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Just slightly higher in the cost per drink but ... what a satisfying difference in taste!
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If you have an excess of acids in your blood, your 15 miles of kidney tubes may be over-worked. These tiny filters and tubes are working day and night to help [illegible] your system of excess acids and poisonous waste.

When disorder of kidney function permits poisonous matter to remain in your blood, it may cause backache, [illegible] pains, leg pains, loss of pep and energy, getting up nights, swelling, puffiness under the eyes, headaches and dizziness. Frequent or scanty passages with smarting and burning sometimes shows there is something wrong with your kidneys or bladder.

[illegible] don't wait! Ask your druggist for Doan's Pills, used successfully by millions for over forty years. They give happy relief and will help the 15 miles of kidney tubes flush out poisonous waste from your blood. Get Doan's Pills.

(Continued from page 28)

Smaller War Plants Corporation, who said he wanted to be free from the Army in order to fight more vigorously for increased civilian production. He noted that "from here out" there would be "increasing competition" between war and civilian production. He feels keenly that certain civilian requirements, particularly those essential to war workers, should be regarded as indispensable to the war effort.

Much thinking has been done concerning both termination of war contracts (which may be terminated at the discretion of the government) and the future use of the gigantic war plants which have been erected all over the nation at government expense. War Department officials believe that many of these plants (some so secret the public hasn't been told about them) will have definite peacetime uses, particularly in the aeronautics field. Munitions plants probably will be the hardest to convert.

DRAINS on the United States for food, clothing, and some machinery and consumers' goods will be governed largely by the state of ruin in which Europe is left. They will be governed also by the degree of responsibility which the British Empire and other members of the United Nations are able and willing to shoulder. The United States right now is attempting to work out an international agreement for the feeding and care of ravaged postwar Europe, but, come what may, it is a pretty good guess that we will be one of the heavy contributors.

Governor Lehman's OFRRO now is proceeding with plans to see that Europeans get the difference between what food they can raise for themselves and a minimum subsistence diet. It is hoped that the job can be done by the proposed UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration), which will lighten the load on America. Minimum clothing requirements also will be provided. Plans are being considered for rehabilitation of European agriculture and industries which will provide necessary clothing. But these things cannot be done overnight, so for a long time the victors may count on supplementing the minimum needs of a large portion of Europe.

One highly intelligent thing already being accomplished is the building up of food stock piles in North Africa. Wheat, olive oil, fruits, vegetables, and a small amount of mutton can be produced there. They will help feed conquered Italy and relieve the strain on Allied larders and shipping. Unfortunately, there is not enough of this food—nor are there North Africas handy to all looted nations. Even Russia, with her rich Ukraine ravaged, may need some food at first. Government planners are looking to Latin America to help meet some of these needs; Argentina is potentially important.

In the field of price control and government regulations, it is most unlikely that Germany's fall will cause so much as a ripple. Inflation will have to be controlled—probably even for a reasonable period after the end of the Pacific war. However, even men of importance in the bureaucratic hierarchy concede that "the quicker the government is able to get out of business, the better it will be."

One business man now serving the government in an important planning capacity was asked by the writer if he thought the partial switch-back to civilian production could be accomplished quickly and smoothly. "Unless we make a terrific effort to bungle it deliberately," he replied, "I do not see how it can be mismanaged."

In certain government files are statistics showing the current and estimated demands for washing machines, refrigerators, electric ranges and heaters, flatirons, and other such commodities. In another column are figures on current inventories. The figures would make a manufacturer groan.

No automobiles have been made since February, 1942; 1,500,000 cars were estimated lost this year, and the rate is expected to be higher next year. Automotive industry leaders calculate it may take five years of full-speed production to catch up with the demand, which will be equally great in other industries.

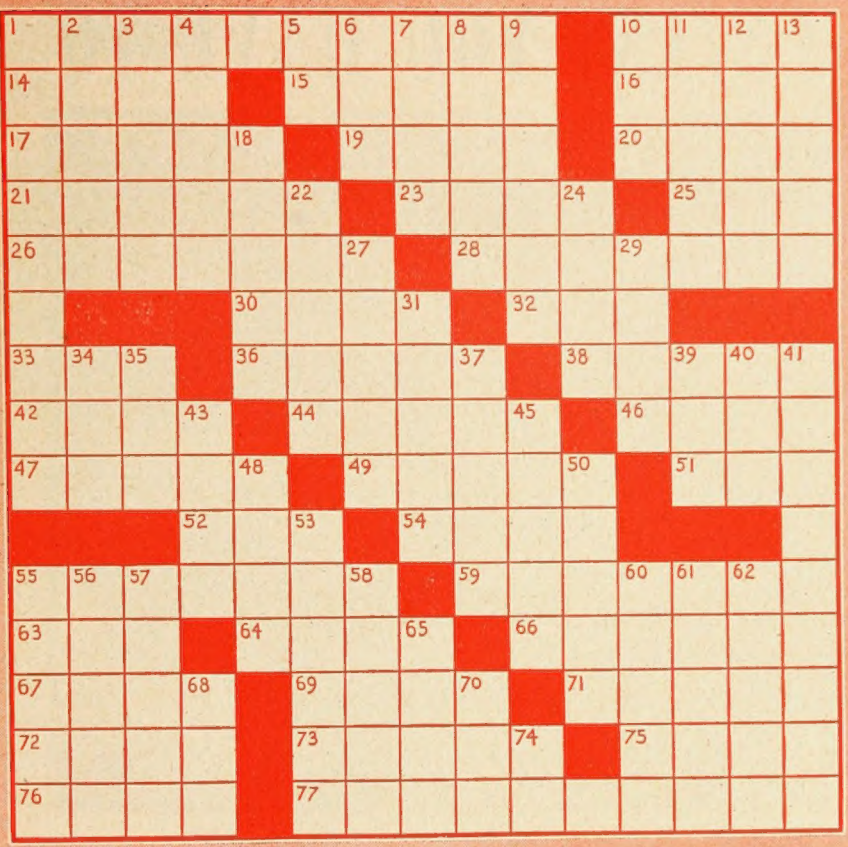
ONE important group that is working in Washington on postwar planning is the Committee for Economic Development, composed of and financed by business men, operating in close though unofficial liaison with the Department of Commerce. Its members are convinced that industry is ready to do a miracle job of quick reconversion, and they are counting on doing some of that job when Germany is knocked out. Their chairman, Paul G. Hoffman, president of Studebaker Corporation, can give you a long list of the things industry is prepared to do immediately—even before it tackles the "dream projects": "teardrop" cars, family helicopters, glass-and-plastic houses, electronic developments, etc.

These "dream projects" all are things of the future. No one need expect to celebrate the defeat of Germany—or even of Japan—by rushing out to place an order for a helicopter or a plastic car to be delivered the following month or year. The immediate postwar days, hard-headed business men warn, will see first a slow trickle of cars and many other commodities exactly like those we were buying on the day that Hitler invaded Poland. Vast new horizons of better goods and better living are being planned for us, but they are not going to be wrapped up as a morning-after-the-armistice gift.

THE END

COCKEYED CROSSWORDS

BY TED SHANE



HORIZONTAL

1 Though he has no beef coming under rationing, he's what we'll all soon be
10 Jokes with their pants down (sing.)
14 Old Blood and Guts (Gr.)
15 What Hon. Jap feel so now war get tough
16 Kind of Franchot
17 Sheep with B. O.
19 Carve and sling the papes
20 Holiday, as in —— be sorry!
21 Handy with the pie lifters
23 Normandie of the mud flats
25 Step on it, folks, and can the Axis!
26 Ask for in advance (Hope you get it!)
28 Sir Lance-a-lots, fought best by day
30 Where veritas lurks
32 It's hung even on trains these days (abbr.)
33 One-horsepower motor, operates on hay coupon
36 Take it on the lam with pop's lamb
38 Pilgrim father, and grim pill, too
42 Non-seagoing tug
44 Tomorrow's bacon
46 Jernt
47 Old-fashioned smoker
49 Bulkeley's Bay
51 You need it to perform a St. Vitamin's Dance
52 Bowl call
54 If restless, do this first thing in October
55 Harry James calls it Toots!
59 They seam to please Kaiser and Country

Last week's answer

63 How to keep cool on a hot stove
64 Undrinkable Eastern port
66 Where people keep going through ceilings
67 Deviled yeggs
69 Just another Laus
71 Ago
72 Want
73 Rainbow with fins
75 The end of Polonius
76 Nazi breakfast drink
77 Thanks to our flyers, there's a shortage of them in Germany

VERTICAL

1 Bums
2 Wot John Gilpin did on an 'orse, 'e did! (two words)
3 Gypsy Rose Lee car strip
4 Ecease emotion
5 Bit of an ass
6 Spare part, used on rear end
7 French islands
8 Usually seen with a lass
9 Woman's greatest battle on the home front is for them
10 Eye sore
11 Most active thing about a congressman
12 Sober
13 13 to 19
18 Dumb Dora's brain pan
22 What we'll develop if the Axis wins
24 Rope with oomph
27 A Quiz Kid doesn't guess, he ——!
29 Hockable teeth
31 It'll take you out of this world
34 Backward era
35 A good thing for a congressman and a comedian
37 Place to rest on your arms, soldier!
39 It's on the down grade
40 First Lady of the Land
41 Act like the finance company
43 Very important thing to keep this winter
45 Cheap things in dictatorships
48 Knocks wood
50 Irishmen, Manxmen, and Erse-ters
53 Freedom from disease
55 A Frankenstein's monster with four heads
56 He smacked his gal one on the kisser in the balcony
57 The lower's the higher, while this is the lower
58 Woman's ambition is to get crowned with one
60 Acting
61 Ernest guy to his pals
62 Come again
65 Thing approaching the Axis with cracking sound
68 Steaks Disappear Extraordinarily (abbr.)
70 Pigboat (abbr.)
74 Also, as in Brute Caesar et

The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue.

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DR. R. SCHIFFMANN'S ASTHMADOR

DON'T GO UNLESS YOU HAVE TO

ANY one who fears possible regimentation of the American people can reassure himself by contemplating the pronounced streak of contrariness which forms such an important part of the American character. Tell Americans they can't or dassen't do something they want to do and feel they are entitled to do in a free country, and they are apt to do it even if it kills them.

We've had examples of this peculiar characteristic before, notably during the prohibition era, and are witnessing another now in the persistence with which people who have no business doing so climb onto overcrowded railroad trains to travel hither and yon. Repeated pleas to avoid unnecessary travel by the railroads and government authorities are having little effect.

It's not that officials wish to deny any one the use of our transportation facilities, but the great increase in *necessary* travel makes it the patriotic duty of every one to use the rails only for essential trips. In some sections of the country the situation is worse than in others, and almost everywhere the peak loads come over the week-ends. So even the citizen who has to travel can help by scheduling trips in midweek.

It isn't an easy job to handle the volume of passenger traffic which wartime creates. Equipment is in almost constant service and there is little time between trips for accustomed housekeeping. The railroads would like to scrub the floors and wash the windows after every run. But, with the manpower situation what it is and the pressure of traffic constantly on the backs of their necks, it's not always possible to do so.

People who ride the trains can do their part by keeping the coaches as clean as they can. Newspapers, pie crusts, old drinking cups, cigarette butts, chewing gum, etc., thrown on the floors must be picked up by somebody. The more the litter, the greater the added burden on folks already working terrifically hard.

So if you must travel, be prepared to make allowances. If you are crowded and uncomfortable, if the coach is not as clean as you would like to see it, so what? The railroad will take you there and bring you back. Remember you, as a traveler, add to the crowding and discomfort and impose a further burden upon people and mechanical equipment already overburdened beyond any previous experience. Don't go unless you have to.

Paul Hunter

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